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THE "CHANDOS" CLASSICS.

THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN DRYDEN,

CONTAINING

THE ORIGINAL POEMS, TALES, AND TRANSLATIONS, AND
ADDITIONAL LYRICS FROM THE PLAYS.

With Memoir, Notes, Index, &c.



LONDON:
FREDERICK WARNE AND CO.
AND NEW YORK.
1893.

P R E F A C E.

THE text of this volume of Dryden's Poetical Works has been carefully collated with that of the original editions, and with those of his earlier and more recent editors, especially with that of Sir Walter Scott; and whenever a line or word of the poet has been altered in former revisions of his works, it has been either restored as the original, or is given in the footnotes.

The present edition contains all Dryden's original poems; songs and lyrics from the plays not hitherto reprinted; his translations from Theocritus, Horace, and Homer; and selections from those from Lucretius and Ovid. It may therefore be considered complete.

The first editor of Dryden's Collected Poems was Samuel Derrick, in 1760. Some of his notes have been thought worth retaining. Later on came the Wartons' excellent edition of 1811, and the poet had just previously been fortunate enough to have Sir Walter Scott for his editor, who, in 1808, published Dryden's complete works in eighteen volumes, including not only the plays, poems, and prose, but also the doubtful poems, "Tarquin and Tullia," "Suum Cuique," and "The Soliloquy of a Royal Exile," which have been omitted in all modern editions. The Essay on Satire written by Lord Mulgrave, and the Satire on the Dutch, which is repeated in the prologue and epilogue to "Amboyna," are omitted from the present volume. The prologues and epilogues given, are taken from Scott's edition.

There are a few obsolete words in Dryden, but as these have been explained in the footnotes, it has not been thought necessary to add a glossary; the reader's ear will also naturally detect the differences of pronunciation between the poet's time and our own, the accents on syllables are sometimes changed—as for example *conventicle*,—or on words, as

say for *sea*, *say* for *sea*, the former a fashion which continued till the days of Pope.

English literature owes much to the great satirist, poet, and translator of the close of the seventeenth century. He settled and improved the language ; he was, as Dr. Johnson says, "the Father of English criticism," for he first taught the just principles of composition. He was also the first good translator of the classic poets. The earlier ones—Ben Jonson, Sandys, &c.—adhered closely and roughly to the original ; Cowley went too far in the opposite direction and paraphrased his authors ; it was left to Dryden to render the great thoughts of the Greek and Roman poets in true, pure, and most harmonious English.

As Dryden's poems were published separately at first, it has been thought well to retain the half-page title and motto before the brief introduction to each.

MEMOIR OF DRYDEN.

JOHN DRYDEN was the son of Erasmus Dryden and Mary, the daughter of the Rev. Henry Pickering, Rector of Aldwinckle, All Saints'. He was born at Aldwinckle on 9th of August in 1631.

The Drydens (or, as the name was also frequently spelt, Dridens) were a Cumberland family, who had moved into Northamptonshire in the middle of the sixteenth century. The poet's grandfather, Sir Erasmus Dryden, Bart., resided at Canons-Ashby, Northamptonshire; Erasmus, the poet's father, was his third son. The childhood of "Glorious John" was spent at Tichmarsh, where his parents resided after their marriage; his boyhood at Westminster School, to which he was admitted to a scholarship. The Head Master at the time was Dr. Busby of flogging memory; but Dryden, though he had an enduring memory of the flogging, greatly esteemed his old master for the instruction he had received from him, and sent his two eldest sons to the same school. Locke and South were the poet's schoolfellows there. He was elected to a scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was admitted on the 11th of May 1650. He had already exercised his poetical skill in 1649, in an elegy contributed to a collection, called "The Tears of the Muses," on the death of Henry Lord Hastings; in which, however, it is impossible to find the promise of the future poet. It is full of conceits; some of them of a repulsive character.

In 1650 he wrote a commendatory poem to be prefixed to the Epigrams of his friend John Hoddessdon.

There is only one incident of his university career known, and that is that he was discommuned, and obliged to apologise in hall for disrespect to the vice-master. He graduated as B.A. in 1654, but did not obtain a fellowship.

In 1654 Dryden's father died, leaving his eldest son a small estate at Blakesley of the value, Malone says, of £60 a year; but £20 of it was to be paid to his mother till her death. His father had had to provide for a very large family, as there were thirteen children younger than John.

Blakesley was very near Canons-Ashby, the family estate, and during his frequent visits there, the poet fell in love with his beautiful cousin, Honor Driden, Sir John's daughter. That she had a kindly feeling for her young kinsman, was shown by her giving him a silver inkstand and writing materials, for which he thanked her in a letter containing some flattering lines (see page 220). She had a good fortune as well as possessing beauty, and Dryden might have been a better and happier man if she had loved and married him. It is possible that her father might not have approved of the union, for he was a violent Puritan, hating the Church, and is said to have shamefully desecrated the church at Canons-Ashby.* Dryden passed the three years following his father's death at Cambridge; then he came to London, and is believed to have been secretary to his first cousin, Sir Gilbert Pickering. Both the families of Dryden and Pickering were on the revolutionary side during the Civil War and Commonwealth, and were Presbyterians and Puritans. Dryden's grandfather, Sir Erasmus Driden, had been imprisoned in Charles I.'s reign for refusing loan money.

His father, who was justice of the peace for Northamptonshire, is said to have been "a committee man" of the Commonwealth. Sir Gilbert Pickering, his cousin, was one of the judges at Charles I.'s trial, but did not sign the death sentence. He was chamberlain to Cromwell, and was made one of "Oliver's Lords," as they were scornfully called, in 1658. It was not therefore surprising that the young poet should have joined Waller and Spratt in a monody on the death of Cromwell. His "Heroic Stanzas" were published, with two of theirs, in 1658.

But with Cromwell's death came a mighty change in England. The genial English people had chafed under the severe rule of the Puritans, and when the strong hand of the usurper was taken off them, their loyalty returned with a rebound.

There can be no doubt that Dryden had more sympathy with the Restoration than with the Commonwealth, and that there was a good deal of sincerity in the next poem he published, the "*Astræa Redux*," celebrating the Restoration, and in the "Panegyric on the King's Coronation."

But the fortunes of the families of Dryden and Pickering were unfavourably affected by the change of government. Sir Gilbert escaped any other punishment than being declared incapable of holding any office; but he had to retire to the country, and was no longer able to help his cousin. Dryden then went to lodge with Herringman, a bookseller in the New Exchange, who published his books for the next nineteen years.

It was while living here that he became acquainted with Sir Robert Howard, a younger son of the Earl of Berkshire.

In 1663 the poet married the sister of Sir Robert, Lady Elizabeth Howard, at the queer, quaint little chapel of St. Swithin's, close to London Stone; where two tall figures in wood or pasteboard formerly stood in grooves on each side of the altar. Lady Elizabeth was then twenty-five years old, her bridegroom thirty. She had been the victim of scandal, and it was said that Dryden had been bullied into marrying her. But so many and such cruel falsehoods were published by the base and envious scribblers of that evil age, that it is possible even his marriage into a higher rank than his own might not have escaped their malice; though a letter written by Lady Elizabeth to the second Earl of Chesterfield has been styled "awkward."

A small estate in Wiltshire was settled on her by her father, who was a poor man for his station, in consequence of his fidelity to his sovereign during the past Civil War. The poet was often at Lord Berkshire's seat at Charlton, whence he dated his Introduction to the "*Annus Mirabilis*."

It was not, however, a happy marriage. Lady Elizabeth was of weak mind and violent temper, and probably her poet-husband was "trying." We cannot resist giving here Scott's admirable remarks on the difficulties arising from marriage with an author, more especially a poet, which it would be well for the wives of literary men to read.

"It is difficult," says Sir Walter, "for a woman of a violent temper and weak intellect—and such this lady seems to have been—to endure the apparently causeless fluctuation of spirits incident to one doomed to labour incessantly in the feverish excitement of the imagination. Unintentional neglect, and the inevitable relaxation or rather sinking of spirit which follows violent mental exertion, are easily misconstrued into capricious rudeness or intentional offences; and life embittered by mutual accusation, not the less intolerable because reciprocally just. The wife of one who is to gain his livelihood by poetry, or by any labour (if any there be) equally exhausting, must either have taste enough to relish her husband's performances, or good-nature sufficient to pardon his infirmities. It was Dryden's misfortune that Lady Elizabeth had neither one nor the other."

But Lady Elizabeth might also have some just and very ordinary cause for complaint. Scandal connected her husband's name with that of Mrs. Anne Reeve, an actress.

The Restoration of the King had brought the restoration of the theatres, wholly closed by the Puritans, and there were now two playhouses, the

King's, under the management of Killigrew, and the Duke's, under that of D'Avenant.

Dryden at once began a play on the fate of the Duke of Guise, but by advice of his friends laid it aside ; a comedy by him, however, called "The Wild Gallant," was performed at the King's Theatre in 1663. It proved a failure, but Lady Castlemaine, who might have known the poet, felt for his disappointment, and persuaded Charles II. to have it acted at Court. Pepys says of it : "It was ill-acted, and the play so poor a thing as ever I saw in my life almost, and so little answering the name, that from beginning to the end I could not, nor can at this time tell certainly which was the Wild Gallant."

In 1663 Dryden produced on the stage "The Rival Ladies." It was a tragi-comedy in rhyme, and in the dedication to the Earl of Orrery the poet defends the use of rhyme in the drama.

On the 3rd of February 1664 Pepys writes in his diary : "I saw Dryden, the poet I knew at Cambridge, at the Coffee-House in Covent Garden with all the wits of the town."

Dryden helped his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Howard, to write "The Indian Queen," a tragedy, which was brought out with great success in January 1664. He wrote a sequel play called "The Indian Emperor," in which the same scenes and dresses were used, and Montezuma again appeared. It was extremely successful.

But now an end was put to all theatrical performances, for the Plague broke out with terrible severity in London ; and Dryden and his wife abandoned their home and found refuge at Charlton, the seat of Lady Elizabeth's father, where her eldest son was born. Here, in his enforced seclusion, Dryden wrote the "Annus Mirabilis," an historical poem, written after the style of Sir William D'Avenant's "Gondibert," in stanzas of four lines.

He also, whilst at Charlton, wrote his "Essay on Dramatic Poetry," a dialogue between Eugenius, Lisideius, Crites, and Neander, by whom were meant Lord Buckhurst, Sir Charles Sedley, Sir Robert Howard, and the author. This Essay contains his famous character of Shakspeare, which is thought to be unrivalled. The Essay, however, led to a quarrel between the poet and his brother-in-law ; Sir Robert was annoyed at the part assigned him in the dialogue, and wrote his opinion of the Essay in the preface to his play, "The Duke of Lerma." Dryden answered him in a "Defence of the Essay on Dramatic Poesy," prefixed to the second edition of "The Indian Emperor." But this disagreement did not last, and on the reconciliation of the former friends the "Defence" was withdrawn, and is now very rarely to be obtained.

At Christmas 1666, after the great Plague and the great Fire, the theatres were again opened ; and Dryden produced his comedy of "Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen." It was very successful. Pepys records in his diary, March 2, 1666-7 : "After dinner with my wife to the King's House to see the "Mayden Queen," a new play of Dryden's, mightily commended for the regularity of it, and the strain and wit ; and the truth is, there is a comical part done by Nell, which is Florimell, that I never can hope ever to see the like done again by man or woman."

"Nell" is Nell Gwyn, who had now begun her theatrical career. Charles. II. was delighted with the play (the plot of which he is said to have suggested), and desired that it should be called "his play." The plot, Dryden says, was taken from the "Grand Cyrus," the famous French romance of Mdlle. Scudery.

"The Wild Gallant" was now revived, for the fame of its author was fully established.

In the same year he produced "Sir Martin Mar-all," one of his most successful plays. It was suggested to him by Molière's "Etourdi," which had been recently translated by the Duke of Newcastle. This drama was followed by "The Tempest" (altered from Shakspeare !) by Dryden and D'Avenant. Both plays were produced at the Duke's Theatre, and were so successful that the King's Company (under Killigrew) proposed that Dryden should enter into a contract with them to supply them with three plays a year ; on payment to him on their part of one share and a quarter, of the twelve shares and three quarters held by the whole Company. The poet failed to comply with his part of the contract, seldom producing more than one play a year : but that it must have been fully remunerative is proved by the theatrical company paying him £300 or £400 a year.

In 1672 the theatre was burned down, however, and it cost £4000 to rebuild it. Dryden's receipts were diminished, but the Company seem to have been fully aware of his value, and allowed him the usual "Author's third night" for his "All for Love," though as a shareholder he could not have claimed it.

But we are forestalling. In 1668 D'Avenant the Poet-Laureate died, and the office was conferred in 1670—very graciously and with many kind words in the patent—on Dryden. With it was united the office of Historiographer to the King, and the two were worth £200 a year ; the Laureate had also a butt of Canary sent yearly to him. Malone estimates that with the theatrical income, his own patrimony, and the Laureateship, &c., his whole income must have been about £557 a year. The Laureate salary was, however, very ill-paid, as in 1680 it was four years in arrears.

Dryden's next play after "The Tempest" alterations was "An Evening's

Charles good-naturedly consented. It was performed there by the lords and ladies of Whitehall; Lord Mulgrave wrote the Prologue to it; Rochester himself the Prologue for the second performance; and both were spoken by Lady Elizabeth Howard, a great beauty of the Court. Of course, the royal approval ensured the success of the play at Dorset Gardens, the Duke's Theatre, and Settle, delighted at his success and believing it due solely to his own genius, published the play with "sculptures" (the first time that illustrations had been appended to a play) at the price of two shillings—double the usual charge—and prefixed to it a dedication to the Earl of Norwich insolently levelled at Dryden.

Dryden was infuriated. He was conscious that Settle was a fool, but he could not bear to see such a one usurp his place,* and perhaps fatally injure his future prospects. Still, it is to be regretted that the man who had so good-naturedly laughed at "The Rehearsal" should have resented so violently this passing triumph. He united with Shadwell and Crowne in writing a severe criticism on "The Emperor of Morocco."

Rochester had a bitter feud with Lord Mulgrave, who was a patron of Dryden's, and Mulgrave had posted him (Rochester) as a coward for refusing to fight a duel with him. Lord Mulgrave wrote afterwards an "Essay on Satire," which is generally printed amongst Dryden's Poems, and was believed to have been written by him. Certainly at the time it was believed to have proceeded from the pen of the poet, though it was probably only corrected by him. Rochester was severely satirised in it; he was exceedingly annoyed, but said in a letter that he should "leave the repartee to Black Will with a cudgel."

Black Will faithfully fulfilled his mission, for as Dryden was returning home one December night (1679) from Will's Coffee House, through Rose Alley, Covent Garden, he was waylaid and attacked by a band of hired ruffians, who beat him severely. The Duchess of Portsmouth (Louise de Querouaille), who, with the Duchess of Cleveland, was also satirised in the poem, is supposed to have instigated Rochester to commit this outrage. It was well known that he was the author of it (though a reward of fifty pounds was vainly offered for information of the culprits), but Dryden never avenged the cruelty either by his pen or otherwise. Perhaps he remembered that he had received much kindness from the same fickle hand; or he may have thought it unwise to increase the enmity of a man so unscrupulous. Rochester died six months afterwards.

We have told the story of Rochester's faithlessness consecutively; we must now return to the record of Dryden's dramas.

* Settle had, in the title-page of the play, described himself as "Servant to his Majesty," a title which belonged to the Laureate.

In 1674 he published a dramatic poem—not intended for representation on the stage. It was called “The State of Innocence,” and was adapted from Milton’s “Paradise Lost.” The two poets—the elder, and infinitely greater, and the younger—may possibly have known each other, when Milton was Latin Secretary to Cromwell, and Sir Gilbert Pickering was the usurper’s Chamberlain. Dryden, it is certain, had the most profound reverence and admiration for the glorious, blind old poet, and Milton had probably perceived the dormant talent of the youth.

At the time “The State of Innocence” appeared, Milton’s great poem had nearly passed into oblivion; singularly enough, this strange dramatising of its subject recalled the epic to its former place, and made it again known, though Milton was to owe his final popularity to another poet—Addison—who, in the *Spectator*, gave his admirable criticisms on “Paradise Lost.”

Johnson says that such a production as “The State of Innocence” had been foreseen by Marvel, who wrote thus to Milton :—

“Or if a work so infinite be spanned,
Jealous I was lest some less skilful hand,
(Such as disquiet always what is well,
And by ill-imitating would excel),
Might hence presume the whole creation’s day
To change in scenes, and *show it in a play.*”

Milton was dead before the poem was published, so we can never know what his opinion of it would have been; “but,” says Sir Walter Scott, “if tradition can be trusted he said, perhaps on that undertaking, that Dryden was a good rhymers, but no poet.”

In the spring of 1675, “Aurengzebe” appeared. The Eastern Potentate of that name was living at the time, but the great distance which intervened between him and England made it practicable for a dramatist to bring him forward on the stage. Dryden dedicated “Aurengzebe” to his friend Lord Mulgrave, afterwards Duke of Buckingham.

His next play was “All for Love, or the World Well Lost,” a tragedy on the fortunes of Antony and Cleopatra. It is generally thought to be the best of his dramas. In the same year “Limberham” appeared, but it was prohibited after the third night’s performance on account of its gross indelicacy.

In the winter of 1678–9, Dryden joined Lee in the composition of “Cædipus;” writing the first and third acts and planning the scenes himself. Sir Walter Scott remarks, that the “Ghost of Laius” in it “can only be paralleled in Shakspeare’s.”

In 1679 "*Troilus and Cressida*," altered from Shakspeare, was produced and published.

It was on the 18th December in this year, that the cowardly assault on Dryden took place of which we have already spoken, and from which he must have suffered somewhat severely. In the following year (1680) he published his first translation from the classics—the *Epistles of Ovid*—in which work he was joined with Lord Mulgrave; he also wrote a few prologues for the plays of contemporary dramatists; a prologue by his hand being thought likely to ensure the success of the venture. For these prologues Dryden was paid two or three guineas each, and sometimes more.

In 1680 and 1681 England was disturbed and troubled by the Popish Plot, as the base Titus Oates chose to call his series of false accusations. It was in the midst of this excitement that Dryden wrote his two most popular works; one, "*The Spanish Friar*," a tragi-comedy; the other, his wonderful satire of "*Absalom and Achitophel*." In his dedication of the play to Lord Haughton he "recommends a Protestant play to a Protestant patron;" "*The Spanish Friar*" was in fact an attack on the Romanists, and on that account was rapturously received by the public of the day.

Rumours were instantly set afloat that Dryden was in sympathy with Shaftesbury in his opposition to the Court. It was even said that he had meant to satirise the King—that his pension had been taken from him, and that he thus avenged himself.

Dryden's famous satire silenced all these voices.

Lord Shaftesbury was at the time in the Tower. A rabid Protestant, he had done all he could to exclude the Roman Catholic Duke of York from the succession to the crown, and had endeavoured to persuade Charles to declare his illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, the heir to the throne. But nothing could induce the King to wrong his brother, or falsely to assert his son's legitimacy. Therefore a Bill of Exclusion was on March 28, 1681, brought into the Commons and read a first time. But Charles, who was forewarned, instantly dissolved the Parliament, and prosecuted all who had headed the agitation against his brother. Shaftesbury was sent to the Tower in July, and was to be indicted in November. But he had a strong faction on his side, and the press poured out all sorts of songs and pamphlets against the King, the Duke, and the Ministry. It was necessary to give them a powerful answer, and it was Dryden's duty as Laureate to undertake the task. Tate (who wrote the greater part of the second portion of "*Absalom and Achitophel*," and who must have known) tells us that Charles himself desired Dryden to write the satire. The Laureate was quite ready to obey, for his own personal enemies were on the factious side—Buckingham, Shadwell, and Settle—and his friends on the other. "*Of this poem*," says

Johnson, "in which personal satire was applied to the support of public principles, and in which therefore every mind was interested, the reception was eager, and the sale so large, that my father, an old bookseller, told me he had not known it equalled, but by 'Sacheverell's Trial.'"

The poem did not succeed in procuring a verdict against Shaftesbury, the Grand Jury throwing out or "ignoring" the bill; yet the public mind had been turned in the right direction, and Dryden had rendered an immense service to his sovereign and his country. "*Absalom and Achitophel*" went into a second edition the month after its publication.

On Shaftesbury's release from the Tower a medal was struck by his adherents in commemoration of his escape, and the King is said to have suggested to Dryden that it might be the next subject for his satire. In accordance with this hint the Laureate at once wrote his second satire "*The Medal*," which he published anonymously, March 16, 1681-2.

After the appearance of this poem Dryden was assailed, as he had been after the publication of "*Absalom and Achitophel*," by a swarm of adverse criticisms and scurrilous poems. Of these, Shadwell's "*Medal of John Bayes*" was by far the most scurrilous, and greatly enraged Dryden, as he and Shadwell had been old friends. He turned on his assailants, and Shadwell is now chiefly remembered as "*Mac Flecknoe*." Richard Flecknoe, an Irish Roman Catholic priest, was a writer of such wretched doggerel, that his name as a writer became a joke. In the satire Shadwell is represented as *Mac Flecknoe*; *Mac* being the Gaelic word for son.

"*Mac Flecknoe*; or, a Satire on the True Blue Protestant Poet, T. S.," consisted only of a sheet and a half, and was sold for twopence. It was eagerly bought, and everybody laughed over it.

It was followed very shortly afterwards by the Second Part of "*Absalom and Achitophel*," written by Nahum Tate, at Dryden's request, and corrected by the great poet, who also added to it more than 200 vigorous lines of his own. In this work Shadwell and Settle appear as Og and Doeg.

Dryden had written the three satires—"Absalom and Achitophel," "*The Medal*," and "*Mac Flecknoe*," within the space of a year. He is said to have received a present of a hundred broad pieces for the first from the King. "*The Medal*," by the severity of its satire, is said to have hastened Lord Shaftesbury's end; "*Mac Flecknoe*," which the poet thought was his best work, has consigned Shadwell to immortal contempt. Tate's Second Part of "*Absalom and Achitophel*" was not a success; sequels and second parts seldom are; and, by the time it appeared, the excitement about Shaftesbury and the Duke had died out. Tate was the coadjutor of Brady in the translation of the Psalms which superseded the rendering of Sternhold and Hopkins, and which is still bound up in our Prayer Books.

Apparently his religious poem, the "*Religio Laici*" had really a political meaning—a defence of the Church of England against the factious dissenters of the day.

Dryden was now called on by Lee the dramatist, who had aided him with the "*Œdipus*," to assist him with a tragedy that appeared admirably adapted to the disturbed times. It was "*The Duke of Guise*."

In his youth Dryden had written a play on the same subject, which he had suppressed by the advice of his friends. He believed, when he wrote it, that the League presented a parallel to the English Rebellion; he and his coadjutor now thought that it aptly represented the intrigues of Shaftesbury and Monmouth against the King. The League in France, raised by the Guises against the sovereign, did in fact do so; but the play was not licensed for some months after its completion, as it was thought the King's great love for Monmouth might make it disagreeable to him. But it was acted, December 4, 1682, and when published was dedicated to Hyde, Earl of Rochester—a very different character from the man who had last borne that title.

Soon afterwards the Laureate wrote a Preface and Life of the Author, for a new translation of Plutarch's Lives by different writers; translated Maimbourg's "*History of the League*," and published two volumes of Miscellaneous Poems in 1684 and 1685, with contributions from other authors included in the volumes. An appealing letter sent by Dryden about this time to Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, shows that in spite of his unwearied toil, the poet was in difficulties. He begs in it for a half year's salary—so long delayed!—because he is in bad health, and in danger of arrest for debt. His three sons were growing up, and needed education "beyond his fortunes. It is enough," he writes, "for one age to have neglected Mr. Cowley and starved Mr. Butler."

His appeal was answered; his salary was paid in part, and he was appointed a collector of customs in the port of London.

The fixed salary of this office was £5 a year, but the fees must have been the true payment.

Dryden wrote at this time an Opera called "*Albion and Albanus*," who represented the royal brothers. It was rehearsed before Charles; and a sequel, "*King Arthur*," was just ready, when suddenly the King died.

Charles II. had been always courteous and encouraging to Dryden; but had too often given him nothing but promises. He may therefore have naturally hoped better things from James, whom he had of late assiduously courted; and the new king did continue to him the pension of £100 a year given to him by Charles, and confirmed the Laureateship to him also, minus the usual butt of sack!

Some months after James II.'s accession to the throne, Evelyn in his diary says that Dryden, with his two sons and "Mrs. Nelly" (Nell Gwyn), "were going to mass."

It was mentioned only as a report, but it proved correct. The Laureate and his sons had joined the Church of Rome. It was impossible that his conversion should not have been ascribed to interested motives. He was fully aware of the bigotry of James, and knew how great would be the hold on the King of a convert such as himself. And yet he may, like his late sovereign, have long hidden a secret leaning to the Church of Rome in his heart, to be brought out at a convenient season, one of the greatest faults of that Church appearing to be the secrecy in which it works, and its permission to practise deceit in matters of religion. Dryden had begun his life as a Puritan, and could have known very little of the principles of the Church of England. He had been in the habit of conforming to the licentious tastes of his time in his plays, and must therefore have been used to conform to the opinions and wishes of others. It has been noticed that he had "an open mind" on most subjects, and that in "*Religio Laici*" itself, he expresses a desire for an infallible guide. Lady Elizabeth had long been a Romanist, and Dryden must of late years have associated much with persons of that communion. There is one thing to be said for him, however; having once become a Romanist, he changed no more, but was zealous in the cause of his new faith.

The "*Hind and the Panther*" followed closely on Dryden's change of church, and was designed as an effort to draw the churches together, and restore their union. It is a well-written poem, with fine passages in it, but religious controversy cannot be made attractive, even by the Muse of Dryden.

The most famous reply to this poem was made by Charles Montagu (afterwards Lord Halifax), and Matthew Prior the poet. It is called "*The Hind and the Panther transversed to the story of the Country Mouse and the City Mouse.*" It was a kind of supplement to "*The Rehearsal*," Bayes producing a new allegory; a parody of "*The Hind and the Panther.*" It is said that Dryden was extremely hurt by it, as he had been "very civil to the young men." (Spence's *Anecdotes*.)

He translated after the publication of the last-named poem a life of St. Francis Xavier, the patron saint of the Queen, to whom he dedicated the book, prophesying that her prayers to the saint would bring an heir to the throne, a prophesy fulfilled in 1688, when he congratulated Her Majesty and the nation on the birth of a prince, in his poem "*Britannia Rediviva.*"

The Revolution of 1688, which seated William and Mary on the throne, deprived Dryden of the Laureateship, which by the very irony of fate was conferred on his fat rival, Shadwell. His old friend, Buckhurst, Earl of Dorset, came forward, however, generously to assist him; and, to support his family, he returned to writing for the stage. In 1690, his play "Don Sebastian" was performed; and his comedy of "Amphytrion," both of which were very successful. "Don Sebastian" is thought to be equal to his best play, "All for Love."

In 1691 he produced the opera of "King Arthur," omitting the politics. The music was composed by Purcell, and the opera had a great success.

"Cleomenes" appeared in 1692; but, before it was finished, the poet was taken very ill, and his friend Southerne completed it for him.

His last play, "Love Triumphant," proved, like his first drama, a complete failure, and he wrote no more for the theatre.

His Elegy on the Countess of Abingdon's death was written to order. He had never seen the lady, who died suddenly when receiving guests in her own house; but the husband wished to immortalise her name by Dryden's pen, and the poet is said to have received £500 as a gift in return for his monody. In 1693 appeared his and his son's translation of Juvenal and Persius, with a discourse on Satire prefixed; and the third and fourth volumes of "Miscellanies" to which Dryden contributed, both in that year and in 1694.

He now undertook his translation of Virgil. It is traditionally asserted that the first lines were written upon a pane of glass at Chesterton, the home of his cousin John Driden, where sweet Honor Driden kept house for her brother, and doubtless rejoiced in her kinsman's fame.

Addison wrote the Arguments of the books, and an Essay on the Georgics, and the work was published by subscription in 1697; (as Pope's "Homer" was in after years). Pope told Spence that the poet received £1200 for it, and he may have learnt this fact from Tonson the publisher, with whom, by the way, Dryden had several quarrels during the progress of its publication. Tonson wanted him to dedicate it to William III., but Dryden would not hear it: the publisher, however, had made the engraver give to Æneas the hooked nose of William of Orange. The translation was warmly received and greatly praised. Bentley and Swift were the only objectors to it; and Swift's hatred of Dryden (who had told him that he would never be a poet) made him a prejudiced judge of his cousin's work.

It was during these frequent bickerings with Tonson that Dryden

offended at some refusal of the publisher to oblige him, sent him the three following coarse lines :—

“ With leering looks, bull-faced and freckled fair,
With two left legs and Judas-coloured hair,
And frowsy pores that taint the ambient air”—

as a description of his personal appearance.

“ Tell the dog,” said the poet to the messenger who was to take them to Tonson, “ that he who wrote these can write more.”

Dr. Johnson tells us that “ Lord Bolingbroke, who in his youth had cultivated poetry, related to Dr. King of Oxford, that one day when he visited Dryden they heard, as they were conversing, another person entering the house. “ This,” said Dryden, “ is Tonson. You will take care not to depart till he goes away, for I have not completed the sheet that I promised him ; and if you leave me unprotected, I must suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can prompt his tongue.” But these quarrels were eventually made up.

Whilst Virgil was proceeding the poet found time, however, to make a prose translation of Du Fresnoy’s “ Art of Painting,” in which he was assisted, he tells us, by “ many of our most skilful painters and other artists,” who helped him in rendering the terms of art. Malone conjectures that these painters were Sir Godfrey Kneller and Closterman. The version was printed in 1695, and Dryden prefixed to it a Parallel of Poetry and Painting, written, he says in the conclusion, “ in twelve mornings.” It was republished by Richard Graham in 1716, corrected by Jervas the painter, and it contained Pope’s famous Epistle to Jervas. He wrote a Life of Lucian also, to be prefixed to a translation of his works, and this version (though the Life only is by Dryden) is still called Dryden’s Lucian.

In July 1697 his great work—his translation of Virgil—was published. It was a complete success, and sold so rapidly that a second impression was issued the following year. “ It satisfied his friends, and for the most part silenced his enemies,” says Johnson. Pope declared it to be “ the most noble and spirited translation that I know in any language,” and it still holds its high place in English literature. On the same year that Dryden published his translation, he composed his grand “ Ode for St. Cecilia’s Day.” He had previously written a “ Song for St. Cecilia’s Day,” in 1687, which was set to music by Draghi, and performed on November 22, the festival of the saint. The second and immortal Ode was written, as Dryden tells us in a letter to his sons, who were then in Rome, at the request of the stewards who were arranging for the celebration of the

festival, among them being a Mr. Budgeman, whose parents were friends of Lady Elizabeth.

The Ode was afterwards set to music, as every one knows, by Handel, and was performed at Covent Garden in February 1735-6, the receipts being £450. Dryden's production, however, was not at first fortunate enough to have the music of an immortal composer attached to it. It was set to music by Jeremiah Clarke, one of the stewards; but the music was not good, and it was not published.

All his life Dryden had been the mark for all sorts of ungenerous, and even false accusations, and insolent ridicule; now he was attacked by Jeremy Collier, a non-juring clergyman, in his "Short View of the Immorality of the Stage," his name being placed in conjunction with Congreve's and Vanbrugh's. There is no doubt that there was much truth in Collier's animadversions, and they are said to have had a good effect in reforming the stage, which no one who has read Dryden's plays can help acknowledging to have been coarse and licentious in the extreme. Dryden himself felt the justice of Collier's remarks, saying in the preface to his next work, "The Fables," "I shall say the less of Mr. Collier, because, in many places he taxes me justly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine, which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality, and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in the defence of a bad cause, when I have so often drawn it for a good one." This dignified acknowledgment of past faults is worthy of the mature age and better thoughts of the dramatist of the coarse and licentious age of Charles II.

Dryden's next work after Virgil was his famous "Fables," as he calls his modernised versions of some of Chaucer's Tales, and his Translations from Boccaccio. By an agreement with Tonson, he was to receive 250 guineas for ten thousand verses, of which 7500 were already in the publisher's hands; an additional £50 was to be paid him on the appearance of a second edition. The volume published contained 1200 verses.

These "Fables" are very beautiful, especially "Palamon and Arcite" (which had a poetical and most beautiful dedication to the Duchess of Ormonde) and the "Good Parson," which, he says in a letter to Mr. Pepys, he took from Chaucer at the suggestion of that singular but acute person, when he (Dryden) was once dining with him. It was said that the Duke and Duchess of Ormonde sent the poet a present of £500 for this poem, but this is doubted; he received also a "noble present from his cousin,

John Driden of Chesterton, to whom he had written an address, published in the same volume.

Dryden, who was then trying to get a Government appointment, sent these poems to his old adversary, Charles Montagu, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the same volume with the "Fables" were published his translations from Ovid and Homer. The poet was now advanced in years ; but his age was honoured, and his fame secured.

A pleasing picture is presented to us by tradition, of Dryden seated of an evening by the side of the fire in winter in Will's Coffee House, or by the window in summer, surrounded by all the young wits of the day, who thought it a great honour to be offered a pinch from "Glorious John's" snuff-box. Addison, Congreve—whose early efforts Dryden had helped, and whose genius he had acknowledged from the first of their acquaintance—Southerne, Vanbrugh and Granville were his intimate friends. Pope, when a little lad of eleven, succeeded in getting a glimpse of him, and has proudly recorded it.

In fact, Dryden was then the head of the literature of his country, and literary dictator, as Addison, Pope, and above all Samuel Johnson, afterwards became. He often visited his native county, and was much loved and greatly honoured by his relatives. He is said to have played bowls and been fond of fishing when in the country.

Fletcher's "Pilgrim" was performed for his benefit in 1700. It had been revised by Vanbrugh for the occasion, and Dryden added an original scene and wrote a prologue and epilogue for it, in which he attacked Sir Richard Blackmore, who had made an assault on him in his 'Satire against Wit.' He wrote also for this occasion a "Secular Masque." Granville, afterwards Lord Lansdowne, prepared an adaptation of the "Merchant of Venice" to be performed for Dryden's benefit in 1700, but he never received this kindly assistance ; his death preventing it. The profits were accordingly transferred to his son Charles in the following year.

During the early spring of 1700, Dryden was confined to the house by an attack of gout ; a toe mortified, and he refused to have it amputated, though the operation was urged on him by the celebrated surgeon, Hobbs. He met death with courage and composure, dying on May Day at his house, 43 Gerrard Street. He left no will ; Lady Elizabeth, who was very ill at the time, refused to administer to his effects, and therefore this last duty to him was performed by his beloved son Charles.

Dryden had a public funeral, though at first a private one was proposed, for which Montagu, who had not done anything for the poet while living, offered to pay. The poet's body was embalmed and deposited in the

College of Surgeons, where it lay in state till May 13. On that day the funeral took place. Garth pronounced a Latin oration ; Horace's "*Exegi Monumentum*" was sung ; and the coffin was then carried to Westminster Abbey, followed by fifty carriages, in which were Dryden's personal friends. He was buried by the side of Chaucer and Cowley, in the "Poets' Corner," but his grave was left undistinguished till 1720, when a plain monument was erected over the grave by the Duke of Buckinghamshire, inscribed only with the word—"Dryden." The Duchess of Buckinghamshire replaced the inferior bust on the first monument by one by Scheemakers in 1731.

Lady Elizabeth became insane soon after her husband's death, and died in 1714. They had three sons, and were both most affectionate parents. Charles, the eldest son, was educated at Westminster, and elected to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1683. He wrote a few poems ; a Latin one in the second "*Miscellany*," and he translated the seventh Satire of Juvenal for his father's version. He is said to have joined the Church of Rome before his father did, and he was sent by Dryden to Rome, where he was appointed Chamberlain to Pope Innocent XII. He wrote an English poem for the fourth "*Miscellany*" whilst in Italy, but returned to England in bad health, and was thus with his father at the time of his death. He survived the poet only four years, being drowned by accident in the Thames, near Datchet, 1704. John, the second son, was also educated at Westminster, and was elected to Christ Church in 1685. He went to Rome with his brother.

John translated the fourteenth Satire of Juvenal for his father's version, and wrote a comedy performed in 1696, with a prologue by Dryden and an epilogue by Congreve. He survived his father only a year, dying at Rome, January 1701. Erasmus Henry, the third son, was a scholar at the Charter House. He studied at Douay, became a Dominican priest in 1694, and was sent in 1697 to the Convent of the Holy Cross, Bornheim, of which he was sub-prior till 1700, when he returned to England to labour at the Catholic Mission in Northamptonshire. In 1710 he inherited the baronetcy, upon the death of his cousin Sir John Dryden, but died soon afterwards, and was buried at Canons-Ashby.

Sir Erasmus Henry had been taken care of by his cousin Edward Dryden, who possessed Canons-Ashby by will ; the poet's last son having, it is supposed, inherited a touch of his mother's insanity. At his death the baronetcy passed to his father's brother Erasmus, who died in 1718. His grandson John succeeded him, and in him both estates and title were reunited. He survived all his brothers, and died at Canons-Ashby in 1770. His estate was devised to his niece, the daughter of his youngest

brother, Bevil. This lady had married the brother of Sir Geoffrey Page Turner ; he assumed the name of Dryden, and was created a baronet in 1795.

Dryden is said to have been handsome in early life, but he grew very stout as he advanced in years, and, as he was short in stature, obtained the nickname, amongst his many enemies, of "Poet Squab." All his biographers testify to his affection and kindness to his family, and to his amiable conduct towards his friends.

Of his mind, "the portrait which has been left by Congreve, who knew him with great familiarity, is such," says Dr. Johnson, "as adds our love of his manners to our admiration of his genius." He then quotes the following passage from Congreve, who faithfully kept the charge committed to him by Dryden,

"Be kind to my remains ; and, oh, defend
Against your judgment, your departed friend ;
Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
But shade those laurels that descend to you."

"He (Dryden) was," says Congreve, "of a nature exceedingly humane and compassionate ; ready to forgive injuries, and capable of a sincere reconciliation with those who had offended him. His friendship—where he professed it—went beyond his professions. He was of a very easy, pleasing access ; but somewhat slow, and, as it were, diffident, in his advances to others ; he had that in his nature which abhorred intrusion into any society whatever. He was therefore less known, and consequently his character became more liable to misapprehensions and misrepresentations. He was very modest, and very easily discountenanced in his approaches to his equals or superiors. As his reading had been very extensive, so was he very happy in a memory tenacious of everything that he had read. He was not more possessed of knowledge than he was communicative of it ; but then his communication was by no means pedantic, or imposed upon the conversation, but just such, and went so far, as, by the natural turn of the conversation in which he was engaged, it was necessarily promoted or required. He was very ready and gentle in his correction of the errors of any writer who thought fit to consult him, and full as ready and patient to admit the reprehensions of others, in respect of his own oversights or mistakes."

Dryden seems during the greater part of his life to have been subject to the anxieties and annoyances of small means. His incessant industry barely sufficed to keep up the position of a gentleman and to educate his sons, and his complaints of his poverty were frequent, sometimes in accents

of depression ; occasionally in terms of indignation. His countenance is said to have worn an expression of melancholy, and indeed the life must have been sad that had not a congenial consort ; that was constantly disturbed by insolent attacks from envious foes ; and that had to struggle almost vainly against the buffets of evil fortune.

Dryden has been called the father of English criticism and the first satirist of our literature. He was certainly the refiner of our language, and his prose as well as his poetry is of singular excellence. Had he lived in a better age we might have had reason still more to admire his genius.

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HEROIC STANZAS

TO THE MEMORY OF

HIS HIGHNESS, OLIVER,

LATE LORD-PROTECTOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH, &c.

WRITTEN AFTER THE CELEBRATION OF HIS FUNERAL.

NOTE.

These stanzas were originally published in a volume containing poems on the same subject by Waller, the poet, and Mr. Sprat of Oxford—afterwards Bishop of Rochester. Dryden had only written two poems previously ; one on the death of Lord Hastings (which will be found amongst the Elegies and Epitaphs), and a few lines addressed to his friend John Hoddesdon, placed amongst the Epistles.

Cromwell died 3rd September, the anniversary of his greatest victory, 1658. At the time a furious storm was raging. Dryden's family were strong Republicans, and he evidently at this time shared their opinions, but, like Waller, he changed them at the Restoration. Probably the intervening two years had shown him that the Commonwealth could not subsist unless ruled by the iron will of a Cromwell. The verses were written, as the poet tells us in his separate publication of the poem, after the Protector's funeral.

HEROIC STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF OLIVER CROMWELL.

WRITTEN AFTER HIS FUNERAL.

I.

AND now 'tis time ; for their officious haste,
Who would before have borne him to the
sky,
Like eager Romans, ere all rites were past,
Did let too soon the sacred eagle fly.*

II.

Though our best notes are treason to his
fame,
Joined with the loud applause of public
voice ;
Since Heaven, what praise we offer to his
name,
Hath rendered too authentic by its choice.

III.

Though in his praise no arts can liberal be,
Since they, whose muses have the highest
flown,
Add not to his immortal memory,
But do an act of friendship to their own :

IV.

Yet 'tis our duty, and our interest too,
Such monuments as we can build to raise ;
Lest all the world prevent † what we should
do,
And claim a title in him by their praise.

V.

How shall I then begin, or where conclude,
To draw a frame so truly circular ?
For in a round what order can be showed,
Where all the parts so equal perfect
are ?

VI.

His grandeur he derived from Heaven
alone ;
For he was great, 'ere fortune made him
so :
And wars, like mists that rise against the
sun,
Made him but greater seem, not greater
grow.

VII.

No borrowed bays his temples did adorn,
But to our crown he did fresh jewels bring,
Nor was his virtue poisoned soon as born,
With the too early thoughts of being king.

VIII.

Fortune (that easy mistress to the young,
But to her ancient servants coy and
hard)
Him at that age her favourites ranked
among,
When she her best-loved Pompey ‡ did
discard.

* The Romans used to conceal an eagle at the top of the funeral pile of a deceased Emperor. When the pile ignited, the bird was cut loose, to soar upwards. It was supposed that it bore with it the soul of the Caesar who would shortly be deified.

† Forestall.

‡ Pompey reached the height of his fame at forty-five. From that time his good fortune changed, till he was defeated and assassinated in Egypt. Cromwell rose to fame at the age of forty-five, and retained his supremacy over the nation till his death.

IX.

He, private, marked the fault of others' sway,
 And set as sea-marks for himself to shun :
 Not like rash monarchs, who their youth betray
 By acts their age too late would wish undone.

X.

And yet dominion was not his design ;
 We owe that blessing, not to him, but Heaven,
 Which to fair acts unsought rewards did join ;
 Rewards, that less to him than us were given. 40

XI.

Our former chiefs, like sticklers* of the war,
 First sought to inflame the parties, then to poise :
 The quarrel loved, but did the cause abhor ;
 And did not strike to hurt, but make a noise.

XII.

War, our consumption, was their gainful trade :
 We inward bled, whilst they prolonged our pain ;
 He fought to end our fighting, and essayed
 To staunch the blood by breathing of the vein.†

* Sticklers were seconds to duellists, and arbitrators of combats. "Basilus, the judge, appointed sticklers and trumpets, whom the others should obey."—Sir P. Sidney. The chiefs alluded to were Essex and Waller, who were thought to be half-hearted in the contest with the Royalists.

† This line was declared by Dryden's enemies to allude to the murder of Charles I.

Malone gives the following lines from "The Laureat," or "Jack Squabb's (Dryden's) History is a little drawn, Down to his evening, from his earliest dawn."

"Nay, had our Charles, by heaven's severe decree,
 Been found and murdered in the royal tree,
 Even thou hadst praised the fact ; his father slain,
 Thou call'st but gently 'breathing of a vein.'"

XIII.

Swift and resistless through the land he past,
 Like that bold Greek who did the East subdue, 50
 And made to battles such heroic haste,
 As if on wings of victory he flew.

XIV.

He fought secure of fortune as of fame :
 Still, by new maps, the island might be shown,
 Of conquests, which he strewed where'er he came,
 Thick as the galaxy with stars is sown.

XV.

His palms, though under weights they did not stand,
 Still thrived ; no winter could his laurels fade :
 Heaven in his portrait showed a workman's hand,
 And drew it perfect, yet without a shade. 60

XVI.

Peace was the prize of all his toil and care,
 Which war had banished, and did now restore :
 Bologna's walls ‡ thus mounted in the air,
 To seat themselves more surely than before.

XVII.

Her safety rescued Ireland to him owes ;
 And treacherous Scotland to no interest true,
 Yet blest that fate which did his arms dispose
 Her land to civilise, as to subdue.

‡ It is said that at the siege of Bologna in 1512 a mine blew up that part of the wall of the church of Santa Maria del Baracano on which stood a miraculous image of the blessed Virgin. Though it was carried so high that both armies could see one another through the breach, yet it fell again exactly into its place, so that it was impossible to see where it had been separated.—DERRICK.

XVIII.

Nor was he like those stars which only shine,
 When to pale mariners they storms portend : 70
 He had his calmer influence, and his mien
 Did love and majesty together blend.

XIX.

Tis true, his countenance did imprint an awe;
 And naturally all souls to his did bow,
 As wands of divination downward draw,
 And point to beds where sovereign gold
 doth grow.

XX.

When past all offerings to Feretrian Jove,
 He Mars deposed, and arms to gowns
 made yield;
 Successful councils did him soon approve
 As fit for close intrigues, as open field. 80

XXI.

To suppliant Holland he vouchsafed a peace,
 Our once bold rival of the British main,
 Now tamely glad her unjust claim to cease,
 And buy our friendship with her idol, gain.

XXII.

Fame of the asserted sea through Europe
 blown,
 Made France and Spain ambitious of his
 love;
 Each knew that side must conquer he would
 own;
 And for him fiercely, as for empire, strove.

XXIII.

No sooner was the Frenchman's cause em-
 braced,
 Than the light Monsieur the grave Don
 outweighed : 90
 His fortune turned the scale where'er 'twas
 cast;
 Though Indian mines were in the other
 laid.

XXIV.

When absent, yet we conquered in his right:
 For though some meaner artist's skill were
 shown
 In mingling colours, or in placing light;
 Yet still the fair designment was his own.

XXV.

For from all tempers he could service draw
 The worth of each, with its alloy, he knew,
 And, as the confidant of Nature, saw
 How she complexions did divide and
 brew. 100

XXVI.

Or he their single virtues did survey,
 By intuition, in his own large breast,
 Where all the rich ideas of them lay,
 That were the rule and measure to the
 rest.

XXVII.

When such heroic virtue heaven sets out,
 The stars, like commons, sullenly obey;
 Because it drains them when it comes about,
 And therefore is a tax they seldom pay.

XXVIII.

From this high spring our foreign conquests
 flow,
 Which yet more glorious triumphs do
 portend; 110
 Since their commencement to his arms they
 owe,
 If springs as high as fountains may ascend.

XXIX.

He made us freemen of the continent,
 Whom Nature did like captives treat
 before;
 To nobler preys the English lion sent,
 And taught him first in Belgian walks to
 roar.

XXX.

That old unquestioned pirate of the land,
 Proud Rome, with dread the fate of Dun-
 kirk heard;
 And trembling wished behind more Alps to
 stand,
 Although an Alexander * were her
 guard. 120

XXXI.

By his command we boldly crossed the line,
 And bravely fought where southern stars
 arise;

* At this time Alexander VII. was Pope.

Wetraded the far-fetched gold unto the mine,
And that which bribed our fathers made
our prize.

XXXII.

Such was our prince ; yet owned a soul above
The highest acts it could produce to
show :

Thus poor mechanic arts in public move,
Whilst the deep secrets beyond practice
go.

XXXIII.

Nor died he when his ebbing fame went less,
But when fresh laurels courted him to
live ;

120

He seemed but to prevent some new success,
As if above what triumph earth could give.

XXXIV.

His latest victories still thickest came,
As near the centre motion doth increase ;
Till he, pressed down by his own weighty
name,

Did, like the vestal,* under spoils de-
cease.

* Tarpeia, killed by the shields of the Sabines.

XXXV.

But first the ocean as a tribute sent
The giant prince of all her watery herd ;
And the isle, when her protecting genius
went,
Upon his obseques loud sighs con-
ferred.

140

XXXVI.

No civil broils have since his death arose,
But faction now by habit does obey ;
And wars have that respect for his repose,
As winds for halcyons, when they breed
at sea.

XXXVII.

His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest,†
His name a great example stands, to show
How strangely high endeavours may be
blest,
Where piety and valour jointly go.

† This proved not to be the case ; the body of Cromwell was disinterred at the Restoration, dragged to and exposed on the gallows at Tyburn, and finally cast into a hole beneath it. His head was set on a pole at Westminster Hall.

ASTRÆA REDUX:

A POEM ON THE HAPPY RESTORATION AND RETURN OF
HIS SACRED MAJESTY, CHARLES II. 1660.

"Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna."—VIRG.

"The last great age foretold by sacred rhymes
Renews its finished course; Saturnian times
Roll round again."

NOTE.

At the Restoration, Dryden and Waller both addressed poetic congratulations to the King. The story is well known of Charles having asked Waller "why his verses on Cromwell were better than those addressed to him," and the reply, "Sire, poets succeed best in fiction."

Astræa Redux was published in folio by Dryden's publisher, Herringman, in 1662, as were also the panegyric on the King's Coronation, and the letter to Lord Clarendon.

Dryden has been ridiculed for his veering round so easily to opposite opinions, but he has been kept in countenance by men of the present age, as he was by others at the period of this poem. He seems, in fact, to have been able to make himself believe anything he wished—a fatal power against consistency.

ASTRÆA REDUX.

A POEM ON THE HAPPY RESTORATION AND RETURN OF HIS SACRED
MAJESTY CHARLES II. 1660.

Now with a general peace the world was
blest,
While ours, a world divided from the rest,
A dreadful quiet felt, and worser far
Than arms, a sullen interval of war :
Thus when black clouds draw down the
labouring skies,
Ere yet abroad the winged thunder flies,
An horrid stillness first invades the ear,
And in that silence we the tempest fear.
The ambitious Swede,* like restless billows
tossed,
On this hand gaining what on that he lost, 10
Though in his life he blood and ruin
breathed,
To his now guideless kingdom peace be-
queathed.
And Heaven, that seemed regardless of our
fate,
For France and Spain did miracles create ;
Such mortal quarrels to compose in peace,
As nature bred, and interest did increase.
We sighed to hear the fair Iberian bride†
Must grow a lily to the lily's side,
Whilst our cross stars denied us Charles
his‡ bed,
Whom our first flames and virgin love did
wed. 20

For his long absence Church and State did
groan ;
Madness the pulpit, faction seized the
throne :
Experienced age in deep despair was lost,
To see the rebel thrive, the loyal crossed :
Youth, that with joys had unacquainted
been,
Envied gray hairs that once good days had
seen :
We thought our sires, not with their own
content,
Had, ere we came to age, our portion spent.
Nor could our nobles hope their bold
attempt,
Who ruined crowns would coronets ex-
empt. 30
For when, by their designing leaders taught
To strike at power which for themselves
they sought,
The vulgar, gulled into rebellion, armed ;
Their blood to action by the prize was
warmed.
The sacred purple then and scarlet gown,
Like sanguine dye to elephants was shown.
Thus, when the bold Typhœus scaled the sky,
And forced great Jove from his own heaven
to fly
(What king, what crown from treason's
reach is free.
If Jove and Heaven can violated be?), 40
The lesser gods, that shared his prosperous
state,
All suffered in the exiled Thunderer's fate.

* Charles X. of Sweden.

† The Infanta Maria Teresa of Spain, married to Louis XIV. of France. The lilies were the badge of the Bourbons.

‡ Charles *his* was the old possessive case, since contracted to 's.

The rabble now such freedom did enjoy,
As winds at sea, that use it to destroy :
Blind as the Cyclop, and as wild as he,
They owned a lawless savage liberty,
Like that our painted ancestors so prized,
Ere empire's arts their breasts had civilised.
How great were then our Charles his woes,
who thus

Was forced to suffer for himself and us ! 60
He, tossed by fate, and hurried up and down,
Heir to his father's sorrows, with his crown,
Could taste no sweets of youth's desired age ;
But found his life too true a pilgrimage.
Unconquered yet in that forlorn estate,
His manly courage overcame his fate.
His wounds he took, like Romans, on his
breast,
Which, by his virtue, were with laurels
dressed.

As souls reach heaven while yet in bodies pent,
So did he live above his banishment. 60
That sun, which we beheld with cozened eyes
Within the water, moved along the skies.
How easy 'tis, when destiny proves kind,
With full-sailed sails to run before the wind !
But those that 'gainst stiff gales laveering*
go,

Must be at once resolved, and skilful too.
He would not, like soft Otho, hope prevent,
But stayed, and suffered fortune to repent.
These virtues Galba in a stranger sought,
And Piso to adopted empire brought. 70
How shall I then my doubtful thoughts
express,
That must his sufferings both regret and
bless ?

For when his early valour Heaven had
crossed ;
And all at Worcester but the honour lost ;
Forced into exile from his rightful throne,
He made all countries where he came his
own ;

And, viewing monarchs' secret arts of sway,
A royal factor for his † kingdoms lay.
Thus banished David spent abroad his time,
When to be God's anointed was his crime ; 80

* *Laveering* means tacking.

† In the original edition it is *their* kingdoms.

And, when restored, made his proud neigh-
bours rue

Those choice remarks he from his travels
drew.

Nor is he only by affliction shown
To conquer others' realms, but rule his own :
Recovering hardly what he lost before,
His right endears it much ; his purchase more.
Inured to suffer ere he came to reign,
No rash procedure will his actions stain :
To business ripened by digestive thought,
His future rule is into method brought : 90
As they who first proportion understand,
With easy practise reach a master's hand.
Well might the ancient poets then confer
On Night the honoured name of Counsellor,
Since struck with rays of prosperous fortune
blind,

We light alone in dark afflictions find.
In such adversities to sceptres trained,
The name of Great his famous grandsire
gained ; ‡

Who yet a king alone in name and right,
With hunger, cold, and angry Jove did
fight ; 100

Shocked by a Covenanting League's vast
powers,

As holy and as catholic as ours :
Till fortune's fruitless spite had made it
known,

Her blows not shook but riveted his throne.

Some lazy ages, lost in sleep and ease,
No action leave to busy chronicles :
Such, whose supine felicity but makes
In story chasms, in epoches § mistakes ;
O'er whom Time gently shakes his wings of
down,

Till with his silent sickle they are mown. 110
Such is not Charles his too too active age,
Which, governed by the wild distempered
rage

‡ Henry IV. of France, the father of Queen Henrietta Maria, and consequently the King's maternal grandfather, is here meant.

§ The final *es* is pronounced in epoches ; in another place Dryden pronounces *aches a-ches* instead of *aks*. Kemble asserted that it was the right pronunciation.

Of some black star infecting all the skies,
Made him at his own cost like Adam wise.
Tremble ye nations, who secure before,
Laughed at those arms that 'gainst ourselves we bore ;
Roused by the lash of his own stubborn tail,
Our lion now will foreign foes assail.
With alga who the sacred altar strews ?
To all the sea-gods Charles an offering
owes : 120
A bull to thee, Portunus,* shall be slain,
A lamb to you, ye tempests of the main :
For those loud storms that did against him
roar,
Have cast his shipwrecked vessel on the
shore.
Yet as wise artists mix their colour so,
That by degrees they from each other go :
Black steals unheeded from the neighb'ring
white,
Without offending the well-cozened sight :
So on us stole our blessed change ; while we
The effect did feel, but scarce the manner
see. 130
Frosts that constrain the ground, and birth
deny
To flowers that in its womb expecting lie,
Do seldom their usurping power with-
draw,
But raging floods pursue their hasty thaw.
Our thaw was mild, the cold not chased
away,
But lost in kindly heat of lengthened day.
Heaven would no bargain for its blessings
drive,
But what we could not pay for, freely give.
The Prince of Peace would like himself
confer
A gift unhop'd, without the price of
war : 140
Yet, as he knew his blessing's worth, took
care
That we should know it by repeated prayer ;
Which stormed the skies, and ravished
Charles from thence,
As heaven itself is took by violence.

* *Portunus*, the Roman god of harbours.

Booth's† forward valour only served to
show,
He durst that duty pay we all did owe :
The attempt was fair ; but heaven's prefixed
hour
Not come : so like the watchful traveller
That by the moon's mistaken light did rise,
Lay down again, and closed his weary
eyes. 150
'Twas Monk, whom Providence designed
to loose
Those real bonds false freedom did impose.
The blessed saints that watched this turning
scene,
Did from their stars with joyful wonder lean,
To see small clues draw vastest weights
along,
Not in their bulk but in their order strong.
Thus pencils can by one slight touch restore
Smiles to that changed face that wept before.
With ease such fond chimæras we pursue,
As fancy frames for fancy to subdue : 160
But when ourselves to action we betake,
It shuns the mint like gold that chemists
make.
How hard was then his task ! at once to be
What in the body natural we see !
Man's architect distinctly did ordain
The charge of muscles, nerves, and of the
brain,
Through viewless conduits spirits to dis-
pense ;
The springs of motion from the seat of sense.
'Twas not the hasty product of a day,
But the well-ripened fruit of wise delay. 170
He, like a patient angler, ere he strook,
Would let him play a while upon the hook.
Our healthful food the stomach labours thus,
At first embracing what it straight doth crush.
Wise leeches will not vain receipts obtrude,
While growing pains pronounce the humours
crude :
Deaf to complaints they wait upon the ill,
Till some safe crisis authorise their skill.

† Sir George Booth assembled a large body of men for the king's service in Cheshire, took Chester, Chirk Castle, &c., but was defeated at Winnington Bridge by General Lambert.

Nor could his acts too close a vizard wear,
To 'scape their eyes whom guilt had taught
to fear, 180

And guard with caution that polluted nest,
Whence Legion twice before was dis-
possessed :

Once sacred house ; which when they
entered in,

They thought the place could sanctify a sin :
Like those that vainly hoped kind Heaven
would wink,

While to excess on martyrs' tombs they drink,
And as devouter Turks first warn their
souls

To part, before they taste forbidden bowls :
So these, when their black crimes they went
about,

First timely charmed their useless conscience
out. 190

Religion's name against itself was made ;
The shadow served the substance to invade :
Like zealous missions, they did care pretend
Of souls in show, but made the gold their
end.

Th' incensèd powers beheld with scorn from
high

An heaven so far distant from the sky,
Which durst, with horses' hoofs that beat
the ground,

And martial brass, belie the thunder's sound.
'Twas hence at length just vengeance
thought it fit

To speed their ruin by their impious wit 200
Thus Sforza, cursed with a too fertile brain,
Lost by his wiles the power his wit did gain.
Henceforth their fougue must spend at lesser
rate,

Than in its flames to wrap a nation's fate.
Suffered to live, they are like Helots set,
A virtuous shame within us to beget.
For by example most we sinned before,
And glass-like clearness mixed with frailty
bore.

But since reformed by what we did amiss,
We by our sufferings learn to prize our
bliss : 210

Like early lovers, whose unpractised hearts
Were long the may-gaue of malicious arts,

When once they find their jealousies were
vain,

With double heat renew their fires again.

'Twas this produced the joy that hurried
o'er

Such swarms of English to the neighb'ring
shore,

To fetch that prize, by which Batavia made
So rich amends for our impoverished trade.
Oh had you seen from Schevelin's barren
shore

(Crowded with troops, and barren now no
more), 220

Afflicted Holland to his farewell bring

True sorrow, Holland to regret a king !

While waiting him his royal fleet did ride,
And willing winds to their lowered sails
denied.

The wav'ring streamers, flags, and standart
out,

The merry seamen's rude but cheerful
shout ;

And last the cannons' voice that shook the
skies ;

And, as it fares in sudden ecstasies,

At once bereft us both of ears and eyes.

The Naseby,* now no longer England's
shame, 230

But better to be lost in Charles his name

(Like some unequal bride in nobler sheets),

Receives her lord : the joyful London meets

The princely York, himself alone a freight ;

The Swift-sure groans beneath great

Gloster's† weight :

Secure as when the halcyon breeds, with
these,

He that was born to drown might cross the
seas.

Heaven could not own a Providence and take

The wealth three nations ventured at a
stake.

* The *Naseby* was the ship that brought back
the King. Her name then was changed to the
Royal Charles.

† Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester. He was
the child whose pathetic "I will be torn in
pieces first," is recorded in Charles I.'s parting
interview with his children. He died young.

The same indulgence Charles his voyage
blessed, 240

Which in his right had miracles confessed.
The winds that never moderation knew,
Afraid to blow too much, too faintly blew :
Or, out of breath with joy, could not enlarge
Their straitened lungs, or conscious of their
charge.

The British Amphitrite, smooth and clear,
In richer azure never did appear ;
Proud her returning Prince to entertain
With the submitted fasces of the main.

AND welcome now, great monarch, to your
own ; 250

Behold th' approaching cliffs of Albion :
It is no longer motion cheats your view,
As you meet it, the land approacheth you.*
The land returns, and, in the white it wears,
The marks of penitence and sorrow bears.
But you, whose goodness your descent doth
show,

Your heavenly parentage and earthly too ;
By that same mildness, which your father's
crown

Before did ravish, shall secure your own,
Not tied to rules of policy, you find, 260
Revenge less sweet than a forgiving mind.
Thus, when the Almighty would to Moses
give

A sight of all he could behold and live ;
A voice before His entry did proclaim
Long-suffering, goodness, mercy in His
name.

Your power to justice doth submit your cause,
Your goodness only is above the laws ;
Whose rigid letter, while pronounced by you,
Is softer made. So winds that tempests brew,
When through Arabian groves they take
their flight, 270

Made wanton with rich odours, lose their
spite.

* "I know not whether this fancy, however
little be its value, was not borrowed. A French
poet read to Malherbe some verses, in which he
represents France as rising out of its place to
receive the King. 'Though this,' said Malherbe,
'was in my time, I do not remember it.'"—
JOHN WARTON.

And as those lees, that trouble it, refine
The agitated soul of generous wine :

So tears of joy, for your returning, spilt,
Work out, and expiate our former guilt.
Methinks I see those crowds on Dover's
strand,

Who, in their haste to welcome you to land,
Choked up the beach with their still growing
store,

And made a wilder torrent on the shore :
While, spurred with eager thoughts of past
delight, 280

Those, who had seen you, court a second
sight ;

Preventing still your steps, and making haste
To meet you often, whereso'er you passed.
How shall I speak of that triumphant day,
When you renewed th' expiring pomp of
May !

(A month that owns an interest in your name :
You and the flowers are its peculiar claim.)
That star that at your birth shone out so
bright,

It stained the duller sun's meridian light,
Did once again its potent fires renew, 290
Guiding our eyes to find and worship you.

And now Time's whiter series is begun,
Which in soft centuries shall smoothly run :
Those clouds, that overcast your morn, shall
fly,

Dispelled to farthest corners of the sky.
Our nation with united interest blest,
Not now content to poise, shall sway the rest.
Abroad your empire shall no limits know,
But, like the sea, in boundless circles flow.
Your much-loved fleet shall, with a wide
command, 300

Besiege the petty monarchs of the land :
And as old Time his offspring swallowed
down,

Our ocean in its depths all seas shall drown.
Their wealthy trade from pirates' rapine free,
Our merchants shall no more adventurers
be :

Nor in the farthest east those dangers fear,
Which humble Holland must dissemble here.
Spain to your gift alone her Indies owes ;
For what the powerful takes not he bestows :

And France, that did an exile's presence fear,	Oh happy prince, whom Heaven hath taught the way
May justly apprehend you still too near.	By paying vows to have more vows to pay!
At home the hateful names of parties cease,	Oh happy age! Oh times like those alone,
And factious souls are wearied into peace.	By fate reserved for great Augustus' throne!
The discontented now are only they,	When the joint growth of arms and art fore- show
Whose crimes before did your just cause be- tray :	The world a monarch, and that monarch you.
Of those your edicts some reclaim from sins,	
But most your life and blest example wins.	

TO HIS SACRED MAJESTY.

A PANEGYRIC ON HIS CORONATION.*

IN that wild deluge where the world was drowned,	But this untainted year is all your own ; Your glories may without our crimes be shown.
When life and sin one common tomb had found,	We had not yet exhausted all our store,
The first small prospect of a rising hill	When you refreshed our joys by adding more .
With various notes of joy the ark did fill :	As heaven, of old, dispensed celestial dew,
Yet when that flood in its own depths was drowned,	You gave us manna, and still give us new.
It left behind it false and slippery ground ;	Now our sad ruins are removed from sight,
And the more solemn pomp was still deferred,	The season too comes fraught with new de- light :
Till new-born nature in fresh looks appeared.	Time seems not now beneath his years to stoop,
Thus, royal sir, to see you landed here,	Nor do his wings with sickly feathers droop :
Was cause enough of triumph for a year :	Soft western winds waft o'er the gaudy spring,
Nor would your care those glorious joys re- peat,	And opened scenes of flowers and blossoms bring,
Till they at once might be secure and great :	To grace this happy day, while you appear,
Till your kind beams, by their continued stay,	Not king of us alone, but of the year.
Had warmed the ground, and called the damps away.	All eyes you draw, and with the eyes the heart :
Such vapours, while your powerful influence dries,	Of your own pomp yourself the greatest part :
Then soonest vanish when they highest rise.	Loud shouts the nation's happiness proclaim,
Had greater haste these sacred rites pre- pared,	And heaven this day is feasted with your name.
Some guilty months had in your triumphs shared :	Your cavalcade the fair spectators view, From their high standings, yet look up to you.

* April 24, 1661.

From your brave train each singles out a
 prey,
 And longs to date a conquest from your
 day :
 Now charged with blessings while you seek
 repose,
 Officious * slumbers haste your eyes to close ;
 And glorious dreams stand ready to restore
 The pleasing shapes of all you saw before.
 Next to the sacred temple you are led,
 Where waits a crown for your more sacred
 head :
 How justly from the Church that crown is
 due,
 Preserved from ruin, and restored by you !
 The grateful choir their harmony employ,
 Not to make greater, but more solemn
 joy.
 Wrapt soft and warm your name is sent on
 high,
 As flames do on the wings of incense fly :
 Music herself is lost, in vain she brings
 Her choicest notes to praise the best of
 kings :
 Her melting strains in you a tomb have found,
 And lie like bees in their own sweetness
 drowned.
 He that brought peace, all discord could
 atone,
 His name is music of itself alone.
 Now, while the sacred oil anoints your head,
 And fragrant scents, begun from you, are
 spread
 Through the large dome ; the people's joy-
 ful sound,
 Sent back, is still preserved in hallowed
 ground ;
 Which, in one blessing mixed, descends on
 you ;
 As heightened spirits fall on richer dew.
 Not that our wishes do increase your store,
 Full of yourself, you can admit no more ;
 We add not to your glory, but employ
 Our time, like angels, in expressing joy.
 'Tis it duty, or our hopes alone,
 Create that joy, but full fruition :

We know those blessings, which we must
 possess,
 And judge of future by past happiness.
 No promise can oblige a prince so much
 Still to be good, as long to have been such.
 A noble emulation heats your breast,
 And your own fame now robs you of your rest.
 Good actions still must be maintained with
 good,
 As bodies nourished with resembling food.
 You have already quenched sedition's brand ;
 And zeal which burnt it, only warms the
 land.
 The jealous sects, that dare not trust their
 cause,
 So far from their own will as to the laws,
 You for their umpire and their synod take,
 And their appeal alone to Cæsar make.
 Kind Heaven so rare a temper did provide,
 That guilt, repenting, might in it confide.
 Among our crimes oblivion may be set ;
 But 'tis our king's perfection to forget.
 Virtues unknown to these rough northern
 climes
 From milder heavens you bring without
 their crimes.
 Your calmness does no after-storms provide,
 Nor seeming patience mortal anger hide,
 When empire first from families did spring,
 Then every father governed as a king :
 But you, that are a sovereign prince, allay
 Imperial power with your paternal sway.
 From those great cares when ease your soul
 unbends,
 Your pleasures are designed to noble ends :
 Born to command the mistress of the seas,
 Your thoughts themselves in that blue em-
 pire please.
 Hither in summer evenings you repair
 To taste the fraicheur of the purer air :
 Undaunted here you ride, when winter raves,
 With Cæsar's heart that rose above the
 waves.
 More I could sing, but fear my numbers stays ;
 No loyal subject dares that courage praise.
 In stately frigates most delight you find,
 Where well-drawn battles fire your martial
 mind.

* *Officious*—ready ; also serviceable.

What to your cares we owe, is learnt from hence,
 When even your pleasures serve for our defence. 110
 Beyond your court flows in th' admitted tide,
 Where in new depths the wondering fishes glide :
 Here in a royal bed the waters sleep ; *
 When, tired at sea, within this bay they creep,
 Here the mistrustful fowl no harm suspects,
 So safe are all things which our king protects.
 From your loved Thames a blessing yet is due,
 Second alone to that it brought in you :
 A queen, near whose chaste womb, ordained by fate,
 The souls of kings unborn for bodies wait. 120
 It was your love before made discord cease
 Your love is destined to your country's peace.

Both Indies, rivals in your bed, provide
 With gold or jewels to adorn your bride.
 This to a mighty king presents rich ore,
 While that with incense does a god implore.
 Two kingdoms wait your doom, and, as you choose,
 This must receive a crown, or that must lose.
 Thus, from your royal oak, like Jove's of old,
 Are answers sought, and destinies foretold : 130
 Propitious oracles are begged with vows,
 And crowns that grow upon the sacred boughs.
 Your subjects, while you weigh the nations' fate,
 Suspend to both † their doubtful love or hate :
 Choose only, sir, that so they may possess,
 With their own peace their children's happi-

TO

THE LORD CHANCELLOR HYDE.†

PRESENTED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1662.

MY LORD,

WHILE flattering crowds officiously appear,
 To give themselves, not you, an happy year ;
 And by the greatness of their presents prove
 How much they hope, but not how well they love ;

The Muses, who your early courtship boast,
 Though now your flames are with their beauty lost,

Yet watch their time, that, if you have forgot
 They were your mistresses, the world may not :

Decayed by time and wars, they only prove
 Their former beauty by your former love ; 10

The ornamental water in St. James's Park is meant ; and the king's love of birds is alluded to here also.

And now present, as ancient ladies do,
 That, courted long, at length are forced to woo.
 For still they look on you with such kind eyes,
 As those that see the Church's sovereign rise ;

† The countries of France and Spain.
 † Edward Earl of Clarendon, to whom this poem is addressed, having followed the King to the Continent in his exile, was appointed Secretary of State at Bruges, and constituted Lord High Chancellor of England on the demise of Sir Richard Lane. He was confirmed in this last post at the Restoration, when he was also chosen Chancellor of the University of Oxford, in the room of the Duke of Somerset, and created Baron Hindon, Viscount Cornbury, and Earl of Clarendon. His great work is the History of the Rebellion.

From their own order* chose, in whose
high state,
They think themselves the second choice of
fate.

When our great monarch into exile went,
Wit and religion suffered banishment.

Thus once, when Troy was wrapped in fire
and smoke,

The helpless gods their burning shrines for-
sook; †

They with the vanquished prince and party
go,

And leave their temples empty to the foe.
At length the Muses stand, restored again
To that great charge which nature did
ordain;

And their loved Druids seem revived by fate,
While you dispense the laws, and guide the
state.

The nation's soul, our monarch, does dis-
pense,

Through you, to us his vital influence;
You are the channel, where those spirits flow,
And work them higher, as to us they go.

In open prospect nothing bounds our eye,
Until the earth seems joined unto the sky:

So in this hemisphere our utmost view
Is only bounded by our king and you:

Our sight is limited where you are joined,
And beyond that no farther heaven can find.

So well your virtues do with his agree,
That, though your orbs of different great-
ness be,

Yet both are for each other's use disposed,
His to inclose, and yours to be inclosed.

Nor could another in your room have been,
Except an emptiness had come between.

Well may he then to you his cares impart,
And share his burden where he shares his
heart.

In you his sleep still wakes; his pleasures
find

Their share of business in your labouring
mind.

* *From their own order chose, &c.]* The
Cardinals who choose the Pope.

† The tutelary gods of the heathen cities were
said to forsake their shrines when the city was
about to be taken.

So when the weary sun his place resigns,
He leaves his light, and by reflection shines.

Justice, that sits and frowns where public
laws

Exclude soft mercy from a private cause, 80
In your tribunal most herself doth please;
There only smiles because she lives at ease;
And, like young David, finds her strength
the more,

When disencumbered from those arms she
wore.

Heaven would our royal master should ex-
ceed

Most in that virtue, which we most did need;
And his mild father (who too late did find
All mercy vain but what with power was
joined)

His fatal goodness left to fitter times,
Not to increase, but to absolve our
crimes: 80

But when the heir of this vast treasure knew
How large a legacy was left to you,

(Too great for any subject to retain)
He wisely tied it to the crown again:

Yet, passing through your hands, it gathers
more,

As streams, through mines, bear tincture of
their ore.

While empiric politicians use deceit,
Hide what they give, and cure but by a
cheat;

You boldly show that skill which they pre-
tend,

And work by means as noble as your end; 70
Which should you veil, we might unwind
the clue,

As men do nature, till we came to you.
And as the Indies were not found, before

Those rich perfumes, which, from the happy
shore,

The winds upon their balmy wings conveyed,
Whose guilty sweetness first their world
betrayed;

So by your counsels we are brought to view
A rich and undiscovered world in you.

By you our monarch does that fame assure,
Which kings must have, or cannot live
secure: 80

For prosperous princes gain their subjects' heart,

Who love that praise in which themselves have part.

By you he fits those subjects to obey,
As heaven's eternal monarch does convey
His power unseen, and man, to his designs
By his bright ministers the stars, inclines.

Our setting sun, from his declining seat,
Shot beams of kindness on you, not of beat :

And, when his love was bounded in a few,
That were unhappy that they might be true, 90

Made you the favourite of his last sad times,

That is a sufferer in his subjects' crimes :
Thus those first favours you received, were sent,

Like heaven's rewards in earthly punishment.

Yet fortune, conscious of your destiny,
E'en then took care to lay you softly by ;
And wrapped your fate among her precious things,

Kept fresh to be unfolded with your king's
Shown all at once you dazzled so our eyes,
As new-born Pallas did the gods surprise : 100

When, springing forth from Jove's new closing wound,

She struck the warlike spear into the ground ;
Which sprouting leaves did suddenly in- close,

And peaceful olives shaded as they rose.

How strangely active are the arts of peace,
Whose restless motions less than war's do cease !

Peace is not freed from labour but from noise ;

And war more force, but not more pains employs :

Such is the mighty swiftness of your mind,
That, like the earth's, it leaves our sense behind, 110

While you so smoothly turn and roll our sphere,

That rapid motion does but rest appear.

For, as in nature's swiftness, with the throng
Of flying orbs while ours is borne along,
All seems at rest to the deluded eye,
Moved by the soul of the same harmony,
So, carried on by your unwearied care,
We rest in peace and yet in motion share.
Let Envy then those crimes within you see,
From which the happy never must be free ; 120

Envy, that does with misery reside,
The joy and the revenge of ruined pride.
Think it not hard, if at so cheap a rate
You can secure the constancy of fate,
Whose kindness sent what does their malice seem,

By lesser ills the greater to redeem.
Nor can we this weak shower a tempest call,

But drops of heat, that in the-sunshine fall.
You have already wearied fortune so,
She cannot farther be your friend or foe ; 130
But sits all breathless, and admires to feel
A fate so weighty, that it stops her wheel.
In all things else above our humble fate,
Your equal mind yet swells not into state,
But, like some mountain in those happy isles,

Where in perpetual spring young nature smiles,

Your greatness shows : no horror to affright,
But trees for shade, and flowers to court the sight :

Sometimes the hill submits itself a while
In small descents, which do its height be- guile ; 140

And sometimes mounts, but so as billows play,

Whose rise not hinders but makes short our way.

Your brow which does no fear of thunder know,

Sees rolling tempests vainly beat below ;
And, like Olympus' top, th' impression wears

Of love and friendship writ in former years.
Yet, unimpaired with labours, or with time,
Your age but seems to a new youth to climb.

Thus heavenly bodies do our time beget,
 and measure change, but share no part of
 it. 150
 and still it shall without a weight increase,
 like this new year, whose motions never
 cease.

For since the glorious course you have
 begun
 Is led by Charles, as that is by the sun,
 It must both weightless and immortal
 prove,
 Because the centre of it is above.

TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS.*

ON THE MEMORABLE VICTORY GAINED BY THE DUKE OVER THE HOLLANDERS,
 JUNE 3, 1665, AND ON HER JOURNEY AFTERWARDS INTO THE NORTH.

MADAM,

WHEN for our sakes, your hero you resigned
 To swelling seas, and every faithless wind ;
 When you released his courage, and set free
 A valour fatal to the enemy ;
 You lodged your country's cares within
 your breast,
 (The mansion where soft love should only
 rest :)
 And, ere our foes abroad were overcome,
 The noblest conquest you had gained at
 home.
 Ah, what concerns did both your sorrows divide !
 Your honour gave us what your love
 denied : 10
 And 'twas for him much easier to subdue
 Those foes he fought with, than to part
 from you.
 That glorious day, which two such navies
 saw,
 As each unmatched might to the world give
 law.

Neptune, yet doubtful whom he should obey,
 Held to them both the trident of the sea :
 The winds were hushed, the waves in ranks
 were cast,
 As awfully as when God's people past :
 Those, yet uncertain on whose sails to blow,
 These, where the wealth of nations ought
 to flow. 20
 Then with the duke your highness ruled the
 day :
 While all the brave did his command obey,
 The fair and pious under you did pray.
 How powerful are chaste vows ! the wind
 and tide
 You bribed to combat on the English side.
 Thus to your much-loved lord † you did
 convey
 An unknown succour, sent the nearest way.
 New vigour to his wearied arms you brought,
 (So Moses was upheld while Israel fought)
 While, from afar, we heard the cannon
 play, 30
 Like distant thunder on a shiny day.
 For absent friends we were ashamed to fear,
 When we considered what you ventured
 there.

* Anne Hyde, the Duke of York's first wife, was the daughter of Lord Clarendon. The Duke espoused her privately some time before he announced his marriage to the King his brother, or to her own father. Anne was the mother of four children. The two elder died soon after their mother; the two younger, Mary and Anne, became queens-regnant of England.

† James, brother of the King and Duke of York, afterwards James II.

Ships, men, and arms, our country might
 restore,
But such a leader could supply no more.
With generous thoughts of conquest he did
 burn,
Yet fought not more to vanquish than return.
Fortune and victory he did pursue,
To bring them as his slaves to wait on you.
Thus beauty ravished the rewards of
 fame, 40
And the fair triumphed when the brave
 o'ercame.
Then, as you meant to spread another way,
By land your conquests, far as his by sea,
Leaving our southern clime, you marched
 along
The stubborn North, ten thousand Cupids
 strong.

Like commons the nobility resort,
In crowding heaps, to fill your moving
 court :
To welcome your approach the vulgar run,
Like some new envoy from the distant
 sun,
And country beauties by their lovers go, 50
Blessing themselves, and wondering at the
 show.
So when the new-born Phoenix first is seen,
Her feathered subjects all adore their queen,
And while she makes her progress through
 the East,
From every grove her numerous train's in-
 creased :
Each poet of the air her glory sings,
And round him the pleased audience clap
 their wings.

ANNUS MIRABILIS ;
THE YEAR OF WONDERS, 1666.

AN HISTORICAL POEM

CONTAINING THE PROGRESS AND VARIOUS SUCCESSES OF OUR NAVAL WAR WITH
HOLLAND UNDER THE CONDUCT OF HIS HIGHNESS PRINCE RUPERT, AND HIS
GRACE THE DUKE OF ALBEMARLE ; AND DESCRIBING THE FIRE OF LONDON.

" Multum interest res poscat, an homines latius imperare velint '
Trajan Imperator ad Plin.—PLIN. Epist. x. 33.

" Urbs antiqua ruit, multos dominata per annos."—VIRG. *Æn.* ii. 363.

NOTE.

Both 1665 and 1666 were remarkable years, but Dryden has of course chosen the latter for the subject of his poem, as it was a period of victory over the Dutch.

Moved by their old commercial jealousy of the Hollanders, the merchants of England clamoured for a war in 1664. Before any battle was fought, however, the Plague broke out in London, and raged with great fury ; but on the 3rd of June, the Duke of York, who had been made Lord High Admiral of the Fleet, encountered the Dutch fleet under Admiral Opdam off Lowestoffe. The battle was terrible, but England was victorious, and the Duke distinguished himself by great bravery in the action.

In 1666 the command of the fleet was divided between Monk and Prince Rupert. The Dutch fleet was under the command of De Ruyter, Opdam having perished with his ship at the battle off Lowestoffe. It is of the encounters between these fleets that the poem treats, and then of the Fire.

The measure chosen by Dryden for his heroic poem seems scarcely adapted to it ; but he took the idea from Davenant's Gondibert.

ANNUS MIRABILIS;
THE YEAR OF WONDERS, 1666.
AN HISTORICAL POEM.

TO
THE METROPOLIS OF GREAT BRITAIN,
THE MOST RENOWNED AND LATE FLOURISHING CITY OF LONDON
IN ITS REPRESENTATIVES THE LORD MAYOR AND COURT OF ALDERMEN,
THE SHERIFFS, AND COMMON COUNCIL OF IT.

As perhaps I am the first who ever presented a work of this nature to the metropolis of any nation, so it is likewise consonant to justice, that he who was to give the first example of such a dedication should begin it with that city which has set a pattern to all others of true loyalty, invincible courage, and unshaken constancy. Other cities have been praised for the same virtues, but I am much deceived if any have so dearly purchased their reputation; their fame has been won them by cheaper trials than an expensive, though necessary war, a consuming pestilence, and a more consuming fire. To submit yourselves with that humility to the judgments of Heaven, and at the same time to raise yourselves with that vigour above all human enemies; to be combated at once from above and from below; to be struck down and to triumph: I know not whether such trials have been ever paralleled in any nation: the resolution and successes of them never can be. Never had prince or people more mutual reason to love each other, if suffering for each other can endear affection. You have come together a pair of matchless lovers, through many difficulties; he, through a long exile, various traverses of fortune, and the interposition of many rivals, who violently ravished and withheld you from him; and certainly you have had your share in sufferings. But Providence has cast upon you want of trade, that you might appear bountiful to your country's necessities; and the rest of your afflictions are not more the effects of God's displeasure (frequent examples of them having been in the reign of the most excellent princes) than occasions for the manifesting of your Christian and civil virtues. To you, therefore, this year of wonders is justly dedicated, because you have made it so. You, who are to stand a wonder to all years and ages, and who have built yourselves an immortal monument on your own ruins. You are now a Phoenix in her ashes, and, as far as

humanity can approach, a great emblem of the suffering Deity ; but Heaven never made so much piety and virtue to leave it miserable. I have heard, indeed, of some virtuous persons who have ended unfortunately, but never of any virtuous nation. Providence is engaged too deeply when the cause becomes so general ; and I cannot imagine it has resolved the ruin of that people at home which it has blessed abroad with such successes. I am therefore to conclude that your sufferings are at an end ; and that one part of my poem has not been more an history of your destruction than the other a prophecy of your restoration ; the accomplishment of which happiness, as it is the wish of all true Englishmen, so is it by none more passionately desired than by the greatest of your admirers, and most humble of your Servants.

JOHN DRYDEN.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ENSUING POEM,

IN

A LETTER TO THE HON. SIR ROBERT HOWARD.*

SIR,—I am so many ways obliged to you, and so little able to return your favours, that like those who owe too much, I can only live by getting farther into your debt. You have not only been careful of my fortune, which was the effect of your nobleness, but you have been solicitous of my reputation, which is that of your kindness. It is not long since I gave you the trouble of perusing a play for me, and now, instead of an acknowledgment, I have given you a greater, in the correction of a poem. But since you are to bear this persecution, I will at least give you the encouragement of a martyr ; you could never suffer in a nobler cause. For I have chosen the most heroic subject which any poet could desire : I have taken upon me to describe the motives, the beginning, progress, and successes of a most just and necessary war : in it, the care, management, and prudence of our king ; the conduct and valour of a royal admiral, and of two incomparable generals ; the invincible courage of our captains and seamen ; and three glorious victories, the result of all. After this, I have in the *Fire* the most deplorable, but withal the greatest, argument that can be imagined : the destruction being so swift, so sudden, so vast, and miserable, as nothing can parallel in story. The former part of this poem relating to the war, is but a due expiation for my not serving my king and country in it. All gentlemen are almost obliged to it ; and I know no reason we should give that advantage to the commonalty of England, to be foremost in brave actions, which the noblesse of France would never suffer in their peasants. I

* Sir Robert Howard was Dryden's brother-in-law. The poet had married his sister, Lady Elizabeth Howard.

should not have written this but to a person who has been ever forward to appear in all employments, whither his honour and generosity have called him. The latter part of my poem, which describes the Fire, I owe, first to the piety and fatherly affection of our monarch to his suffering subjects; and, in the second place, to the courage, loyalty, and magnanimity of the city; both which were so conspicuous, that I have wanted words to celebrate them as they deserve. I have called my poem historical, not epic, though both the actions and actors are as much heroic as any poem can contain. But since the action is not properly one, nor that accomplished in the last successes, I have judged it too bold a title for a few stanzas, which are little more in number than a single Iliad, or the longest of the Æneids. For this reason (I mean not of length, but broken action, tied too severely to the laws of history) I am apt to agree with those who rank Lucan rather among historians in verse, than epic poets: in whose room, if I am not deceived, Silius Italicus, though a worse writer, may more justly be admitted. I have chosen to write my poem in quatrains, or stanzas of four in alternate rhyme, because I have ever judged them more noble, and of greater dignity, both for the sound and number, than any other verse in use amongst us; in which I am sure I have your approbation. The learned languages have certainly a great advantage of us, in not being tied to the slavery of any rhyme; and were less constrained in the quantity of every syllable, which they might vary with spondees or dactyls, besides so many other helps of grammatical figures, for the lengthening or abbreviation of them, than the modern are in the close of that one syllable, which often confines, and more often corrupts, the sense of all the rest. But in this necessity of our rhymes, I have always found the couplet verse most easy, though not so proper for this occasion: for there the work is sooner at an end, every two lines concluding the labour of the poet; but in quatrains he is to carry it farther on, and not only so, but to bear along in his head the troublesome sense of four lines together. For those who write correctly in this kind, must needs acknowledge, that the last line of the stanza is to be considered in the composition of the first. Neither can we give ourselves the liberty of making any part of a verse for the sake of rhyme, or concluding with a word which is not current English, or using the variety of female rhymes; all which our fathers practised: and for the female rhymes, they are still in use amongst other nations; with the Italian in every line, with the Spaniard promiscuously, with the French alternately; as those who have read the Alarique, the Pucelle, or any of their later poems, will agree with me. And besides this, they write in Alexandrines, or verses of six feet; such as amongst us is the old translation of Homer by Chapman; all which, by lengthening of their chain, makes the sphere of their activity the larger. I have dwelt too long upon the choice of my stanza, which you may remember is much better defended in the preface to Gondibert; and therefore I will hasten to acquaint you with my endeavours in the writing. In general I will only say, I have never yet seen the description of any naval fight in the proper terms which are used at sea; and if there be any such, in another language, as that of Lucan in the third of his Pharsalia, yet I could not avail myself of it in the English; the terms of art in every tongue bearing more of the idiom of it than any other words. We hear indeed among our poets, of the thundering of guns, the smoke, the disorder, and the slaughter; but all these are common notions. And certainly, as those who, in a logical dispute, keep in general terms, would hide a fallacy, so those, who do it in any poetical description, would veil their ignorance.

Descriptas servare vices operumque colores,
Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, Poeta salutor?

For my own part, if I had little knowledge of the sea, yet I have thought it no shame to learn; and if I have made some few mistakes, 'tis only, as you can bear me witness, because I have wanted opportunity to correct them; the whole poem being first written, and now sent you from a place, where I have not so much as the converse of any seaman. Yet though the trouble I had in writing it was great, it was more than recompensed by the pleasure. I found myself so warm in celebrating the praises of military men, two such especially as the Prince and General, that it is no wonder if they inspired me with thoughts above my ordinary level. And I am well satisfied, that, as they are incomparably the best subject I ever had, excepting only the Royal Family, so also, that this I have written of them is much better than what I have performed on any other. I have been forced to help out other arguments; but this has been bountiful to me: they have been low and barren of praise, and I have exalted them, and made them fruitful; but here—*Omnia sponte sua reddit justissima tellus*. I have had a large, a fair, and a pleasant field; so fertile, that, without my cultivating, it has given me two harvests in a summer, and in both oppressed the reaper. All other greatness in subjects is only counterfeit; it will not endure the test of danger; the greatness of arms is only real; other greatness burdens a nation with its weight, this supports it with its strength. And as it is the happiness of the age, so it is the peculiar goodness of the best of kings, that we may praise his subjects without offending him. Doubtless it proceeds from a just confidence of his own virtue, which the lustre of no other can be so great as to darken in him; for the good or the valiant are never safely praised under a bad or a degenerate prince. But to return from this digression to a farther account of my poem; I must crave leave to tell you, that as I have endeavoured to adorn it with noble thoughts, so much more to express those thoughts with elocution. The composition of all poems is, or ought to be, of wit; and wit in the poet, or wit-writing (if you will give me leave to use a school distinction) is no other than the faculty of imagination in the writer, which, like a nimble spaniel, beats over and ranges through the field of memory, till it springs the quarry it hunted after; or, without metaphor, which searches over all the memory for the species or ideas of those things which it designs to represent. Wit written is that which is well defined, the happy result of thought, or product of imagination. But to proceed from wit, in the general notion of it, to the proper wit of an heroic or historical poem, I judge it chiefly to consist in the delightful imaging of persons, actions, passions, or things. 'Tis not the jerk or sting of an epigram, nor the seeming contradiction of a poor antithesis (the delight of an ill-judging audience in a play of rhyme), nor the jingle of a more poor Paranomasia; neither is it so much the morality of a grave sentence, affected by Lucan, but more sparingly used by Virgil; but it is some lively and apt description, dressed in such colours of speech, that it sets before your eyes the absent object, as perfectly and more delightfully than nature. So then the first happiness of the poet's imagination is properly invention or finding of the thought; the second is fancy, or the variation, deriving or moulding of that thought as the judgment represents it proper to the subject; the third is elocution, or the art of clothing and adorning that thought, so found and varied, in apt, significant, and sounding words; the quickness of the imagination is seen in the invention, the fertility in the fancy, and the accuracy in the expression. For the two first of these, Ovid is famous amongst the poets; for the latter, Virgil. Ovid images more often the movements and affections of the mind, either combating between two contrary passions, or extremely discomposed by one. His words therefore are the least part of his care; for he pictures nature in disorder, with which the study and choice of words is inconsistent. This is the proper wit of dialogue or

discourse, and consequently of the drama, where all that is said is to be supposed the effect of sudden thought ; which, though it excludes not the quickness of wit in repartees, yet admits not a too curious election of words, too frequent allusions, or use of tropes, or in fine anything that shows remoteness of thought or labour in the writer. On the other side, Virgil speaks not so often to us in the person of another, like Ovid, but in his own : he relates almost all things as from himself, and thereby gains more liberty than the other, to express his thoughts with all the graces of elocution, to write more figuratively, and to confess as well the labour, as the force of his imagination. Though he describes his Dido well and naturally, in the violence of her passions, yet he must yield in that to the Myrrha, the Biblis, the Althæa, of Ovid ; for as great an admirer of him as I am, I must acknowledge, that if I see not more of their souls than I see of Dido's, at least I have a greater concernment for them : and that convinces me, that Ovid has touched those tender strokes more delicately than Virgil could. But when action or persons are to be described, when any such image is to be set before us, how bold, how masterly are the strokes of Virgil !—We see the objects he presents us with in their native figures, in their proper motions ; but so we see them, as our own eyes could never have beheld them so beautiful in themselves. We see the soul of the poet, like that universal one of which he speaks, informing and moving through all his pictures :

—Totamque lufusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.

We behold him embellishing his images, as he makes Venus breathing beauty upon her son Æneas,

———lumenque juvenæ
Purpureum, et lætos oculus afflârat honores :
Quale manus addunt Ebori decus, aut ubi flavo
Argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro.

See his Tempest, his Funeral Sports, his Combat of Turnus and Æneas ; and in his Georgics, which I esteem the divinest part of all his writings, the Plague, the Country, the Battle of the Bulls, the Labour of the Bees, and those many other excellent images of nature, most of which are neither great in themselves nor have any natural ornament to bear them up ; but the words wherewith he describes them are so excellent, that it might be well applied to him, which was said by Ovid, *Materiam superabat opus*. The very sound of his words has often somewhat that is connatural to the subject ; and while we read him, we sit, as in a play, beholding the scenes of what he represents. To perform this he made frequent use of tropes, which you know change the nature of a known word, by applying it to some other signification ; and this is it which Horace means in his epistle to the Pisos :

Dixeris egregiè, notum si callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum———

But I am sensible I have presumed too far to entertain you with a rude discourse of that art which you both know so well, and put into practice with so much happiness. Yet before I leave Virgil, I must own the vanity to tell you, and by you the world, that he has been my master in this poem. I have followed him everywhere, I know not with what success, but I am sure with diligence enough ; my images are many of them copied from him, and the rest are imitations of him. My expressions, also, are as near as the

Idioms of the two languages would admit of in translation. And this, sir, I have done with that boldness for which I will stand accountable to any of our little critics, who, perhaps, are no better acquainted with him than I am. Upon your first perusal of this poem, you have taken notice of some words which I have innovated (if it be too bold for me to say refined) upon his Latin; which, as I offer not to introduce into English prose, so I hope they are neither improper nor altogether inelegant in verse; and in this Horace will again defend me.

Et nova, fictaque nuper, habebunt verba fidem, si
Græco fonte cadunt, parcè detorta——

The inference is exceeding plain; for if a Roman poet might have liberty to coin a word, supposing only that it was derived from the Greek, was put into a Latin termination, and that he used this liberty but seldom, and with modesty; how much more justly may I challenge that privilege to do it with the same prerequisites, from the best and most judicious of Latin writers? In some places, where either the fancy or the words were his, or any other's, I have noted it in the margin, that I might not seem a plagiarist; in others I have neglected it, to avoid as well tediousness as the affectation of doing it too often. Such descriptions or images well wrought, which I promise not for mine, are, as I have said, the adequate delight of heroic poesy; for they beget admiration, which is its proper object; as the images of the burlesque, which is contrary to this, by the same reason beget laughter: for the one shows nature beautified, as in the picture of a fair woman, which we all admire; the other shows her deformed, as in that of a lazar, or of a fool with distorted face and antic gestures, at which we cannot forbear to laugh, because it is a deviation from nature. But though the same images serve equally for the Epic poesy, and for the Historic and Panegyric, which are branches of it, yet a several sort of sculpture is to be used in them. If some of them are to be like those of Juvenal, *Stantes in curribus Æmiliani*, heroes drawn in their triumphal chariots, and in their full proportion; others are to be like that of Virgil, *Spirantia mollius æra*: there is somewhat more of softness and tenderness to be shown in them. You will soon find I write not this without concern. Some, who have seen a paper of verses, which I wrote last year to her Highness the Duchess, have accused them of that only thing I could defend in them. They said, I did *humi serpere*, that I wanted not only height of fancy but dignity of words to set it off. I might well answer with that of Horace, *Nunc non erat his locus*; I knew I addressed them to a lady, and, accordingly, I affected the softness of expression and the smoothness of measure, rather than the height of thought; and in what I did endeavour, it is no vanity to say I have succeeded. I detest arrogance; but there is some difference betwixt that and a just defence. But I will not farther bribe your candour or the reader's. I leave them to speak for me; and, if they can, to make out that character, not pretending to a greater, which I have given them.

And now, sir, 'tis time I should relieve you from the tedious length of this account. You have better and more profitable employment for your hours, and I wrong the public to detain you longer. In conclusion, I must leave my poem to you with all its faults, which I hope to find fewer in the printing by your emendations. I know you are not of the number of those of whom the younger Pliny speaks: *Nec sunt parùm multi, qui carpere amicos suos judicium vocant*: I am rather too secure of you on that side. Your candour in pardoning my errors may make you more remiss in correcting them; if you will not withal consider that they come into the world with your approbation and through

your hands. I beg from you the greatest favour you can confer upon an absent person, since I repose upon your management what is dearest to me, my fame and reputation; and therefore I hope it will stir you up to make my poem fairer by many of your blots; if not, you know the story of the gamester who married the rich man's daughter, and when her father denied the portion, christened all her children by his surname, that if, in conclusion, they must beg, they should do so by one name as well as by the other. But since the reproach of my faults will light on you, 'tis but reason I should do you that justice to the readers, to let them know that if there be anything tolerable in this poem, they owe the argument to your choice, the writing to your encouragement, the correction to your judgment, and the care of it to your friendship, to which he must ever acknowledge himself to owe all things, who is,—Sir, the most obedient and most faithful of your Servants,

JOHN DRYDEN.

FROM CHARLTON,* IN WILTSHIRE,
Nov. 10, 1666.

* The home of the Earl of Berkshire (the father of Lady Elizabeth Dryden), where her husband often stayed before and after his marriage.

ANNUS MIRABILIS

THE YEAR OF WONDERS, 1666

I.

IN thriving arts long time had Holland
grown,
Crouching at home and cruel when abroad:
Scarce leaving us the means to claim our own;
Our king they courted, and our merchants
awed.

II.

Trade, which like blood should circularly
flow,
Stopped in their channels, found its
freedom lost:
Thither the wealth of all the world did go,
And seemed but shipwrecked on so base
a coast.

III.

For them alone the heavens had kindly heat;
In eastern quarries ripening precious
dew: *
For them the Idumæan balm did sweat,
And in hot Ceylon spicy forests grew.

IV.

The sun but seemed the labourer of their year;
Each waxing † moon supplied her watery
store,
To swell those tides, which from the line
did bear
Their brimful vessels to the Belgian shore.

* Precious stones at first are dew, condensed and hardened by the warmth of the sun, or subterranean fires. *Original edition*, 1667.

† According to their opinion, who think that great heap of waters under the Line is depressed into tides by the moon, towards the poles. *Original edition* Dryden's note, *waxing* is waxing.

V.

Thus, mighty in her ships, stood Carthage
long,
And swept the riches of the world from far;
Yet stooped to Rome, less wealthy, but
more strong:
And this may prove our second Punic
war.

VI.

What peace can be, where both to one
pretend?
(But they more diligent, and we more
strong)
Or if a peace, it soon must have an end;
For they would grow too powerful were
it long.

VII.

Behold two nations then, engaged so far,
That each seven years the fit must shake
each land:
Where France will side to weaken us by war,
Who only can his vast designs withstand.

VIII.

See how he feeds th' Iberian ‡ with delays,
To render us his timely friendship vain: §
And while his secret soul on Flanders preys,
He rocks the cradle of the babe of
Spain. §

‡ Iberian] The Spaniard. *Original edition*.
§ The babe of Spain was Charles II., who succeeded Philip IV. while still in his infancy. Louis XIV. was anxious to obtain the Netherlands.

IX.

Such deep designs of empire does he lay
 O'er them, whose cause he seems to take
 in hand ;
 And prudently would make them lords at sea,
 To whom with ease he can give laws by
 land.

X.

This saw our king ; and long within his
 breast
 His pensive counsels balanced to and fro :
 He grieved the land he freed should be
 oppressed,
 And he less for it than usurpers do. 40

XI.

His generous mind the fair ideas drew
 Of fame and honour, which in dangers
 lay ;
 Where wealth, like fruit on precipices, grew,
 Not to be gathered but by birds of prey.

XII.

The loss and gain each fatally were great ;
 And still his subjects called aloud for war ;
 But peaceful kings, o'er martial people set,
 Each other's poise and counterbalance
 are.

XIII.

He first surveyed the charge with careful eyes,
 Which none but mighty monarchs could
 maintain ; 50
 Yet judged, like vapours that from limbecs
 rise,
 It would in richer showers descend again.

XIV.

At length resolved t' assert the watery ball,
 He in himself did whole Armadas bring :
 Him aged seamen might their master call,
 And choose for general, were he not their
 king.

XV.

It seems as every ship their sovereign knows,
 His awful summons they so soon obey ;

So hear the scaly herd when Proteus blows,*
 And so to pasture follow through the
 sea.† 60

XVI.

To see this fleet upon the ocean move,
 Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies ;
 And heaven, as if there wanted lights above,
 For tapers made two glaring comets rise.

XVII.

Whether they unctuous exhalations are,
 Fired by the sun, or seeming so alone :
 Or each some more remote and slippery star,
 Which loses footing when to mortals
 shown.

XVIII.

Or one, that bright companion of the sun,‡
 Whose glorious aspect sealed our new-
 born king ; 70
 And now, a round of greater years begun,
 New influence from his walks of light did
 bring.

XIX.

Victorious York did first with famed success,
 To his known valour make the Dutch
 give place :
 Thus Heaven our monarch's fortune did
 confess,
 Beginning conquest from his royal race.

XX.

But since it was decreed, auspicious king,
 In Britain's right that thou should'st wed
 the main,
 Heaven, as a gage, would cast some precious
 thing,
 And therefore doomed that Lawson should
 be slain. 80

* "Cæruleus Proteus immania ponti
 Armenta, et magnas pascit sub gurgite
 phocas"—Virg. Dryden's note.

† Proteus was the shepherd of Neptune, there-
 fore Milton speaks of "the Carpathian wizard's
 hook" (or crook) in "Comus."

‡ A new star was said to have appeared at the
 time of Charles II.'s birth ; but Lilly affirmed that
 it was only the planet Venus, which is occasion-
 ally seen by daylight.

XXI.

Lawson* amongst the foremost met his
fate,
Whom sea-green Sirens from the rocks
lament :
Thus as an offering for the Grecian state,†
He first was killed who first to battle
went.

XXII.

Their chief blown up in air,‡ not waves,
expired,
To which his pride presumed to give the
law :
The Dutch confessed Heaven present, and
retired,
And all was Britain the wide ocean saw.

XXIII.

To nearest ports their shattered ships repair,
Where by our dreadful cannon they lay
awed ; 90
So reverently men quit the open air,
Where thunder speaks the angry gods
abroad.

XXIV.

And now approached their fleet from India,
fraught §
With all the riches of the rising sun :
And precious sand from southern || climates
brought,
The fatal regions where the war begun.

XXV.

Like hunted castors, conscious of their store,
Their way-laid wealth to Norway's coast
they bring :

* Sir John Lawson, a gallant English admiral,
was killed in the battle of June 3, 1665, when he
was admiral of the red under the Duke of York.

† Protesilaus. It had been prophesied when
the Greeks sailed for Troy that the army whose
warrior was first slain should conquer. Protesilaus
gave himself a willing victim ; sprang on shore
first of the Greeks, and was instantly slain by
Hector, as he intended to be. See Wordsworth's
exquisite poem "Laodamia."

‡ The Admiral of Holland. *Dryden.*

§ The attempt at Berghen. *Dryden.* It was
actually a failure of the English.

|| Guinea. *Dryden.*

There first the North's cold bosom spices
bore,
And winter brooded on the eastern
spring. 100

XXVI.

By the rich scent we found our perfumed
prey,
Which flanked with rocks, did close in
covert lie ;
And round about their murdering cannon
lay,
At once to threaten and invite the eye.

XXVII.

Fiercer than cannon, and than rocks more
hard,
The English undertake th' unequal war :
Seven ships alone, by which the port is
barred,
Besiege the Indies, and all Denmark dare.

XXVIII.

These fight like husbands, but like lovers
those :
These fain would keep, and those more
fain enjoy : 110
And to such height their frantic passion
grows,
That what both love, both hazard to
destroy.

XXIX.

Amidst whole heaps of spices lights a ball,
And now their odours armed against them
fly :
Some precious by shattered porcelain fall,
And some by aromatic splinters die.

XXX.

And though by tempests of the prize bereft,
In heaven's inclemency some ease we find :
Our foes we vanquished by our valour left,
And only yielded to the seas and wind. 120

XXXI.

Nor wholly lost we so deserved a prey ;
For storms, repenting, part of it restored :
Which as a tribute from the Baltic sea,
The British ocean sent her mighty lord.

XXXII.

Go, mortals, now, and vex yourselves in vain
For wealth, which so uncertainly must
come :

When what was brought so far, and with
such pain,
Was only kept to lose it nearer home.

XXXIII.

The son, who, twice three months on th'
ocean tossed,
Prepared to tell what he had passed
before, ¹³⁰
Now sees in English ships the Holland coast,
And parents' arms, in vain, stretched
from the shore.

XXXIV.

This careful husband had been long away,
Whom his chaste wife and little children
mourn ;
Who on their fingers learned to tell the day
On which their father promised to return.

XXXV.

Such are the proud designs of human-kind,
And so we suffer shipwreck everywhere !
Alas ! what port can such a pilot find,
Who in the night of fate must blindly
steer ! ¹⁴⁰

XXXVI.

The undistinguished seeds of good and ill,
Heaven, in his bosom, from our know-
ledge hides :
And draws them in contempt of human skill,
Which oft for friends mistaken foes
provides.

XXXVII.

Let Munster's prelate * ever be accursed,
In whom we seek the German faith in
vain :

* The Prime Bishop of Munster received a subsidy from the English Government on condition that he should invade Holland. He did so, but almost immediately made a separate treaty with the Dutch and withdrew his forces. His treachery was owing to his fear of France, who had then joined the Dutch in the war.

Tacitus saith of the Germans, *Nullos mortalium fide aut armis ante Germanos esse.*
—DRYDEN.

Alas ! that he should teach the English first,
That fraud and avarice in the Church
could reign !

XXXVIII.

Happy, who never trust a stranger's will,
Whose friendship's in his interest under-
stood ! ¹⁸⁰
Since money given but tempts him to be ill,
When power is too remote to make him
good.

XXXIX.

Still now, alone the mighty nations strove ;
The rest, at gaze, without the lists did
stand :
And threatening France, placed like a
painted Jove,
Kept idle thunder in his lifted hand.

XL.

That eunuch guardian of rich Holland's
trade,
Who envies us what he wants power t'
enjoy ;
Whose noiseful valour does no foe invade,
And weak assistance will his friends de-
stroy. ⁶⁰

XLI.

Offended that we fought without his leave,
He takes this time his secret hate to show : †
Which Charles does with a mind so calm
receive,
As one that neither seeks nor shuns his foe.

XII.

With France, to aid the Dutch, the Danes
unite :
France as their tyrant, Denmark as their
slave.
But when with one three nations join to fight,
They silently confess that one more brave.

XLIII.

Lewis had chased the English from his
shore ;
But Charles the French as subjects does
invite : ¹⁷⁰

† War declared by France. Original edition.

Would Heaven for each some Solomon restore,
Who, by their mercy, may decide their right!

XLIV.

Were subjects so but only by their choice,
And not from birth did forced dominion take,

Our prince alone would have the public voice;
And all his neighbours' realms would deserts make.

XLV.

He without fear a dangerous war pursues,
Which without rashness he began before:
As honour made him first the danger choose,
So still he makes it good on virtue's score. 180

XLVI.

The doubled charge his subjects' love supplies,
Who, in that bounty, to themselves are kind:

So glad Egyptians see their Nilus rise,
And in his plenty their abundance find.

XLVII.

With equal power he does two chiefs create,*
Two such as each seemed worthiest when alone;

Each able to sustain a nation's fate,
Since both had found a greater in their own.

XLVIII.

Both great in courage, conduct, and in fame,
Yet neither envious of the other's praise; 190
Their duty, faith, and interest too the same,
Like mighty partners equally they raise.

XLIX.

The prince long time had courted fortune's love,

But once possessed did absolutely reign:
Thus with their Amazons the heroes strove,
And conquered first those beauties they would gain.

* Prince Rupert and Duke of Albemarle sent to sea. Original edition, marg. note.

L.

The Duke beheld, like Scipio, with disdain,
That Carthage, which he ruined, rise once more;

And shook aloft the fasces of the main,
To fright those slaves with what they felt before. 200

LI.

Together to the watery camp they haste,
Whom matrons passing to their children show:

Infants' first vows for them to heaven are cast,
And future people † bless them as they go.

LII.

With them no riotous pomp, nor Asian train,
T' infect a navy with their gaudy fears;
To make slow fights, and victories but vain:
But war, severely, like itself, appears.

LIII.

Diffusive of themselves, where'er they pass,
They make that warmth in others they expect; 210
Their valour works like bodies on a glass,
And does its image on their men project.

LIV.

Our fleet divides, and straight the Dutch appear,
In number, and a famed commander,
bold: ‡

The narrow seas can scarce their navy bear,
Or crowded vessels can their soldiers hold.

LV.

The Duke, less numerous, but in courage more,

On wings of all the winds to combat flies:
His murdering guns a loud defiance roar,
And bloody crosses on his flag-staffs rise. 220

† —future people] "Examina infantium futurisque populus."—PLIN. JUN. in *Pan. ad Traj.* Original edition.

‡ Duke of Albemarle's battle, first day.—DRYDEN. The Dutch Admiral was De Ruyter.

LVI.

Both furl their sails, and strip them for the
fight ;
Their folded sheets dismiss the useless air ;
Th' Elean plains* could boast no nobler
fight,
When struggling champions did their
bodies bare.

LVII.

Borne each by other in a distant line,
The sea-built forts in dreadful order move :
So vast the noise, as if not fleets did join,
But lands unfixed, and floating nations
strove.

LVIII.

Now passed, on either side they nimbly tack ;
Both strive to intercept and guide the
wind : 230
And, in its eye, more closely they come back,
To finish all the deaths they left behind.

LIX.

On high-raised decks the haughty Belgians
ride,
Beneath whose shade our humble frigates
go :
Such port the elephant bears, and so defied
By the rhinoceros her unequal foe.

LX.

And as the build, so different is the fight ;
Their mounting shot is on our sails de-
signed :
Deep in their hulls our deadly bullets light,
And through the yielding planks a passage
find. 240

LXI.

Our dreaded admiral from far they threat,
Whose battered rigging their whole war
receives :
All bare, like some old oak which tempests
beat,
He stands and sees below his scattered
leaves.

LXII.

Heroes of old, when wounded, shelter
sought ;
But he, who meets all danger with dis-
dain,
Ev'n in their face his ship to anchor brought,
And steeple-high stood propt upon the
main.

LXIII.

At this excess of courage, all amazed,
The foremost of his foes awhile with-
draw : 250
With such respect in entered Rome they
gazed,†
Who on high chairs the god-like fathers
saw.

LXIV.

And now, as where Patroclus' body lay,
Here Trojan chiefs advanced, and there
the Greek ;
Ours o'er the Duke their pious wings dis-
play,
And theirs the noblest spoils of Britain
seek.

LXV.

Meantime his busy mariners he hastes,
His shattered sails with rigging to restore ;
And willing pines ascend his broken masts,
Whose lofty heads rise higher than be-
fore. 260

LXVI.

Straight to the Dutch he turns his dreadful
prow,
More fierce the important quarrel to
decide :
Like swans, in long array his vessels show,
Whose crests advancing do the waves
divide.

LXVII.

They charge, recharge, and all along the sea.
They drive, and squander the huge
Belgian fleet.

* Where the Olympic games were celebrated.
—DRYDEN.

† An allusion to the entrance of the Gauls
into Rome, and the fate of the senators who sat
unmoved to receive them. They were at first
taken for gods, then slain.

Berkeley alone,* who nearest danger lay,
Did a like fate with lost Cræusa† meet.

LXVIII.

The night comes on, we eager to pursue
The combat still, and they ashamed to
leave : 270
Till the last streaks of dying day withdrew,
And doubtful moonlight did our rage
deceive.

LXIX.

In th' English fleet each ship resounds with
joy
And loud applause of their great leader's
fame :
In fiery dreams the Dutch they still destroy,
And, slumbering, smile at the imagined
flame.

LXX.

Not so the Holland fleet, who, tired and
done,
Stretched on their decks like weary oxen lie:
Faint sweats all down their mighty members
run ;
Vast bulks which little souls but ill
supply. 280

LXXI.

In dreams they fearful precipices tread :
Or, shipwrecked, labour to some distant
shore :
Or in dark churches walk among the dead ;
They wake with horror, and dare sleep no
more.

LXXII.

The morn they look on with unwilling eyes,
Till from their main-top joyful news they
hear

* Sir William Berkeley led the van. When they got off the coast of Dunkirk, Monk, now Duke of Albemarle, made a sudden tack to avoid running on a sandbank, and the manœuvre brought his topmast by the board. He was consequently obliged to lie to for a long time. Berkeley meanwhile kept his course, not knowing what had happened to the Duke, got engaged alone in the thick of the enemy, and fell on his quarter-deck. His ship was taken.—KNIGHT.

† Cræusa was the wife of Æneas, who got separated from him when escaping from Troy and was lost.

Of ships, which by their mould bring new
supplies,
And in their colours Belgian lions bear.

LXXIII.

Our watchful general had discerned from far
This mighty succour, which made glad
the foe : 290
He sighed, but, like a father of the war,
His face spake hope,‡ while deep his
sorrows flow.

LXXIV.

His wounded men he first sends off to shore,
Never, till now, unwilling to obey :
They not their wounds, but want of strength
deplete,
And think them happy who with him can
stay.

LXXV.

Then to the rest, "Rejoice," said he, "to-day;
In you the fortune of Great Britain lies :
Among so brave a people, you are they
Whom Heaven has chose to fight for such
a prize. 300

LXXVI.

"If number English courages could quell,
We should at first have shunned, not met
our foes :
Whose numerous sails the fearful only tell :
Courage from hearts, and not from
numbers, grows."

LXXVII.

He said, nor needed more to say : with haste
To their known stations cheerfully they go ;
And all at once, disdaining to be last,
Solicit every gale to meet the foe.

LXXVIII.

Nor did th' encouraged Belgians long delay,
But bold in others, not themselves, they
stood : 310
So thick, our navy scarce could sheer their
way,
But seemed to wander in a moving wood.

‡ "Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde
dolorem."—VIRG. Original edition.

LXXIX.

Our little fleet was now engaged so far,
That, like the sword-fish in the whale,
they fought :

The combat only seemed a civil war,
Till through their bowels we our passage
wrought.

LXXX.

Never had valour, no not ours, before
Done ought like this upon the land or main,
Where not to be o'ercome was to do more
Than all the conquests former kings did
gain. 320

LXXXI.

The mighty ghosts of our great Harrys
rose,
And armed Edwards looked with anxious
eyes,
To see this fleet among unequal foes,
By which fate promised them their Charles
should rise.

LXXXII.

Meantime the Belgians tack upon our rear,
And raking chase-guns through our sterns
they send :
Close by, their fire-ships, like jackals, appear,
Who on their lions for the prey attend.

LXXXIII.

Silent in smoke of cannon they come on :
Such vapours once did fiery Cacus
hide : 330
In these the height of pleased revenge is
shown,
Who burn contented by another's side.

LXXXIV.

Sometimes from fighting squadrons of each
fleet,
Deceived themselves, or to preserve some
friend,
Two grappling Ætnas on the ocean meet,
And English fires with Belgian flames
contend.

LXXXV.

Now, at each tack, our little fleet grows less ;
And, like maimed fowl, swim lagging on
the main ;

Their greater loss their numbers scarce
confess,
While they lose cheaper than the English
gain. 340

LXXXVI.

Have you not seen, when, whistled from
the fist,
Some falcon stoops at what her eye de-
signed,
And, with her eagerness the quarry missed,
Straight flies at check, and clips it down
the wind ?

LXXXVII.

The dastard crow that to the wood made
wing,
And sees the groves no shelter can afford,
With her loud caws her craven kind does
bring,
Who, safe in numbers, cuff the noble bird.

LXXXVIII.

Among the Dutch thus Albemarle did fare :
He could not conquer, and disdained to
fly ; 350
Past hope of safety, 'twas his latest care,
Like falling Cæsar, decently to die.

LXXXIX.

Yet pity did his manly spirit move,
To see those perish who so well had fought ;
And generously with his despair he strove,
Resolved to live till he their safety wrought.

XC.

Let other muses write his prosperous fate,
Of conquered nations tell, and kings re-
stored :
But mine shall sing of his eclipsed estate,
Which, like the sun's, more wonders does
afford. 360

XCI.

He drew his mighty frigates all before,
On which the foe his fruitless force em-
ploys :
His weak ones deep into his rear he bore
Remote from guns, as sick men from the
noise.

XCII.

His fiery cannon did their passage guide,
And following smoke obscured them from
the foe ;
Thus Israel safe from the Egyptian's pride,
By flaming pillars, and by clouds, did go.

XCIII.

Elsewhere the Belgian force we did defeat,
But here our courages did theirs sub-
due :
So Xenophon once led that famed retreat,
Which first the Asian empire overthrew.

XCIV.

The foe approached, and one for his bold
sin
Was sunk ; as he that touched the Ark
was slain :*
The wild waves mastered him and sucked
him in,
And smiling eddies dimpled on the main.

XCV.

This seen, the rest at awful distance stood :
As if they had been there as servants set
To stay, or to go on, as he thought good,
And not pursue but wait on his re-
treat.

XCVI.

So Libyan huntsmen, on some sandy plain,
From shady coverts roused, the lion chase :
The kingly beast roars out with loud disdain,
And slowly moves, unknowing to give
place.

XCVII.

But if some one approach to dare his force,
He swings his tail, and swiftly turns him
round ;
With one paw seizes on his trembling horse,
And with the other tears him to the ground.

XCVIII.

Amidst these toils succeeds the balmy night ;
Now hissing waters the quenched guns
restore ;

And weary waves † withdrawing from the
fight,
Lie lulled and panting on the silent shore.

XCIX.

The moon shone clear on the becalmed flood,
Where while her beams like glittering
silver play,
Upon the deck our careful general stood,
And deeply mused on the succeeding day.‡

C.

"That happy sun," said he, "will rise again,
Who twice victorious did our navy see :
And I alone must view him rise in vain,
Without one ray of all his star for me.

CI.

"Yet, like an English general will I die,
And all the ocean make my spacious grave :
Women and cowards on the land may lie,
The sea's a tomb that's proper for the
brave."

CII.

Restless he passed the remnants of the night,
Till the fresh air proclaimed the morning
nigh :
And burning ships, the martyrs of the fight,
With paler fires beheld the eastern sky.

CIII.

But now, his stores of ammunition spent,
His naked valour is his only guard ;
Rare thunders are from his dumb cannon
sent,
And solitary guns are scarcely heard.

CIV.

Thus far had fortune power, here forced to
stay,
Nor longer durst with virtue be at strife ;
This, as a ransom, Albemarle did pay
For all the glories of so great a life.

† —weary waves,] From Statius.

"Nec trucibus fluviiis idem sonus : occidit horror
Æquoris, et terris maria acclinata quiescunt."

Original edition, corrected.

‡ —succeeding day,] The 3rd of June, fam-
ous for two former victories. Original edition.

* Uzza. (1 Chron. xiii. 7-10.)

CV.

For now brave Rupert from afar appears,
 Whose waving streamers the glad general
 knows :
 With full-spread sails his eager navy steers,
 And every ship in swift proportion
 grows. 430

CVI.

The anxious prince had heard the cannon
 long,
 And from that length of time dire omens
 drew
 Of English overmatched, and Dutch too
 strong,
 Who never fought three days, but to
 pursue.

CVII.

Then, as an eagle, who, with pious care,
 Was beating widely on the wing for prey,
 To her now silent eyrie does repair,
 And finds her callow infants forced away :

CVIII.

Stung with her love, she stoops upon the
 plain,
 The broken air loud whistling as she
 flies : 430
 She stops and listens, and shoots forth again,
 And guides her pinions by her young
 ones' cries.

CIX.

With such kind passion hastes the prince
 to fight,
 And spreads his flying canvas to the
 sound ;
 Him, whom no danger, were he there,
 could fright,
 Now, absent, every little noise can wound.

CX.

As in a drought the thirsty creatures cry,
 And gape upon the gathered clouds for
 rain :
 And first the martlet meets it in the sky,
 And with wet wings joys all the feathered
 train. 440

CXI.

With such glad hearts did our despairing
 men
 Salute th' appearance of the prince's fleet :
 And each ambitiously would claim the ken,
 That with first eyes did distant safety
 meet.

CXII.

The Dutch, who came like greedy hinds
 before,
 To reap the harvest their ripe ears did
 yield :
 Now look like those, when rolling thunders
 roar,
 And sheets of lightning blast the standing
 field.

CXIII.

Full in the prince's passage, hills of sand
 And dangerous flats in secret ambush
 lay, 450
 Where the false tides skim o'er the covered
 land,
 And seamen with dissembled depths be-
 tray.

CXIV.

The wily Dutch, who, like fallen angels,
 feared
 This new Messiah's coming there did wait,
 And round the verge their braving vessels
 stcered,
 To tempt his courage with so fair a bait.

CXV.

But he, unmoved, contemns their idle threat,
 Secure of fame whene'er he please to fight :
 His cold experience tempers all his heat,
 And inbred worth does boasting valour
 slight. 460

CXVI.

Heroic virtue did his actions guide,
 And he the substance not th' appearance
 chose :
 To rescue one such friend he took more
 pride,
 Than to destroy whole thousands of such
 foes.

CXVII.

But when approached, in strict embraces
bound,
Rupert and Albemarle together grow ;
He joys to have his friend in safety found,
Which he to none but to that friend
would owe.

CXVIII.

The cheerful soldiers, with new stores supplied,
Now long to execute their spleenful
will ;
And, in revenge for those three days they
tried,
Wish one, like Joshua's, when the sun
stood still.

CXIX.

Thus reinforced, against the adverse fleet,*
Still doubling ours, brave Rupert leads
the way :
With the first blushes of the morn they meet,
And bring night back upon the new-
born day.

CXX.

His presence soon blows up the kindling
fight,
And his loud guns speak thick like angry
men :
It seemed as slaughter had been breathed
all night,
And death new pointed his dull dart
again.

CXXI.

The Dutch too well his mighty conduct
knew,
And matchless courage, since the former
fight :
Whose navy like a stiff-stretched cord did
show,
Till he bore in and bent them into flight.

CXXII.

The wind he shares, while half their fleet
offends
His open side, and high above him shows :

Upon the rest at pleasure he descends,
And, doubly harmed, he double harms
bestows.

CXXIII.

Behind, the general mends his weary pace,
And sullenly to his revenge he sails :
So glides some trodden serpent on the grass,
And long behind his wounded volume
trails.

CXXIV.

Th' increasing sound is borne to either
shore,
And for their stakes the throwing nations
fear :
Their passions double with the cannons'
roar,
And with warm wishes each man com-
bats there.

CXXV.

Plied thick and close as when the fight
began,
Their huge unwieldy navy wastes away ;
So sicken waning moons too near the sun,
And blunt their crescents on the edge of
day.

CXXVI.

And now reduced on equal terms to fight,
Their ships like wasted patrimonies show ;
Where the thin scattering trees admit the
light,
And shun each other's shadows as they
grow.

CXXVII.

The warlike prince had severed from the
rest
Two giant ships, the pride of all the
main ;
Which with his one so vigorously he pressed,
And flew so home they could not rise
again.

CXXVIII.

Already battered, by his lee they lay,
In vain upon the passing winds they
call :
The passing winds through their torn canvas
play,
And flagging sails on heartless sailors fall.

* Fourth day's battle. Original edition.

CXXIX.

Their opened sides receive a gloomy light,
Dreadful as day let into shades below ;
Without, grim death rides barefaced in
their sight,
And urges entering billows as they flow.

CXXX.

When one dire shot, the last they could
supply,
Close by the board the prince's main-
mast bore :
All three now helpless by each other lie,
And this offends not, and those fear no
more. 520

CXXXI.

So have I seen some fearful hare maintain
A course, till tired before the dog she lay :
Who, stretched behind her, pants upon the
plain,
Past power to kill, as she to get away.

CXXXII.

With his lolled tongue he faintly licks his
prey ; -
His warm breath blows her flix* up as
she lies,
She, trembling, creeps upon the ground away,
And looks back to him with beseeching
eyes.

CXXXIII.

The prince unjustly does his stars accuse,
' Which hindered him to push his fortune
on ; 530
For what they to his courage did refuse,
By mortal valour never must be done.

CXXXIV.

This lucky hour the wise Batavian takes,
And warns his tattered fleet to follow home:
Proud to have so got off with equal stakes,
Where 'twas a triumph not to be o'ercome.†

* Flax—fur.

† From Horace—
"Quos opimus
Fallere et effugere triumphus est."
DRYDEN.

CXXXV.

The general's force, as kept alive by fight,
Now, not opposed, no longer can pursue :
Lasting till Heaven had done his courage
right ;
When he had conquered he his weakness
knew. 540

CXXXVI.

He casts a frown on the departing foe,
And sighs to see him quit the watery field ;
His stern fixed eyes no satisfaction show,
For all the glories which the fight did
yield.

CXXXVII.

Though, as when fiends did miracles avow,
He stands confessed ev'n by the boastful
Dutch :
He only does his conquest disavow,
And thinks too little what they found too
much.

CXXXVIII.

Returned, he with the fleet resolved to stay ;
No tender thoughts of home his heart
divide ; 550
Domestic joys and cares he puts away ;
For realms are households which the
great must guide.

CXXXIX.

As those who unripe veins in mines explore,
On the rich bed again the warm turf lay,
Till time digests the yet imperfect ore,
And know it will be gold another day :

CXL.

So looks our monarch on this early fight,
Th' essay and rudiments of great success :
Which all-maturing time must bring to light,
While he, like Heaven, does each day's
labour bless. 560

CXLI.

Heaven ended not the first or second day,
Yet each was perfect to the work de-
signed ;
God and kings work, when they their work
survey,
And passive aptness in all subjects find.

CXLII.

In burdened vessels first, with speedy care,*
 His plenteous stores do seasoned timber
 send :
 Thither the brawny carpenters repair,
 And as the surgeons of maimed ships
 attend.

CXLIII.

With cord and canvas from rich Hamburg
 sent,
 His navy's moulted wings he imps † once
 more ; 570
 Tall Norway fir, their masts in battle spent,
 And English oak, sprung leaks and
 planks, restore.

CXLIV.

All hands employed, the royal work grows
 warm : ‡
 Like labouring bees on a long summer's
 day,
 Some sound the trumpet for the rest to
 swarm,
 And some on bells of tasted lilies play.

CXLV.

With gluey wax some new foundation lay
 Of virgin combs, which from the roof are
 hung :
 Some armed within doors upon duty stay,
 Or tend the sick, or educate the young. 580

CXLVI.

So here some pick out bullets from the sides,
 Some drive old oakum through each
 seam and rift :
 Their left hand does the calking-iron guide,
 The rattling mallet with the right they lift.

* His Majesty repairs the fleet. Original
 edition.

† To *imp* is to graft, plant, adopt. In fal-
 conry it is applied to the process of repairing the
 wings of a hawk (when the quills are broken) by
 means of an adscititious feather.

"If then we shall shake off our slavish yoke,
Imp out our drooping country's broken wing."

SHAKESPEARE, *Ric. II.* act 2, sc. 1.

See also Milton's 15th Sonnet.

‡ "Fervet opus:" the same similitude in
 Virg. Original edition.

CXLVII.

With boiling pitch another near at hand,
 From friendly Sweden brought, the seams
 instops :
 Which well paid o'er, the salt sea-waves
 withstand,
 And shake them from the rising beak
 in drops.

CXLVIII.

Some the galled ropes with dauby marling §
 bind,
 Or cere-cloth masts with strong tarpaul-
 ing coats : 590
 To try new shrouds one mounts into the
 wind,
 And one below, their ease or stiffness
 notes.

CXLIX.

Our careful monarch stands in person by,
 His new-cast cannons' firmness to ex-
 plore :
 The strength of big-corned powder loves
 to try,
 And ball and cartridge sorts for every
 bore.

CL.

Each day brings fresh supplies of arms and
 men,
 And ships which all last winter were
 abroad ;
 And such as fitted since the fight had been,
 Or new from stocks were fall'n into the
 road. 600

CLI.

The goodly London || in her gallant trim,
 (The phoenix daughter of the vanished
 old,)
 Like a rich bride does to the ocean swim,
 And on her shadow rides in floating gold.

CLII.

Her flag aloft spread ruffling to the wind,
 And sanguine streamers seem the flood
 to fire :

§ Marling is a small line daubed with tar.

|| *Loyal London* described.—DRYDEN. *London*
 gave the *London* to Charles.

The weaver, charmed with what his loom
designed,
Goes on to sea, and knows not to retire.

CLIII.

With roomy decks, her guns of mighty
strength,
Whose low-laid mouths each mounting
billow laves : 610
Deep in her draught, and warlike in her
length,
She seems a sea-wasp flying on the waves.

CLIV.

This martial present, piously designed,
The loyal city give their best-loved king :
And, with a bounty ample as the wind,
Built, fitted, and maintained, to aid him
bring.

CLV.

By viewing nature, nature's handmaid, art
Makes mighty things from small begin-
nings grow ;
Thus fishes first to shipping did impart,
Their tail the rudder, and their head the
prow. 620

CLVI.

Some log perhaps upon the waters swam,
An useless drift, which rudely cut within,
And, hollowed, first a floating trough be-
came,
And 'cross some rivulet passage did
begin.

CLVII.

In shipping such as this, the Irish kern *
And untaught Indian on the stream did
glide,
Ere sharp-keeled boats to stem the flood
did learn,
Or fin-like oars did spread from either
side.

CLVIII.

Add but a sail, and Saturn so appeared,
When from lost empire he to exile went, 630

* "The proper Irish soldier."—Spenser's
View of the State of Ireland."

And with the golden age to Tiber steered,
Where coin and first commerce he did
invent.

CLIX.

Rude as their ships was navigation then ;
No useful compass or meridian known ;
Coasting, they kept the land within their ken,
And knew no North but when the Pole-
star shone.

CLX.

Of all who since have used the open sea,
Than the bold English none more fame
have won :
Beyond the year, and out of heaven's high
way, †
They make discoveries where they see
no sun. 640

CLXI.

But what so long in vain, and yet unknown,
By poor mankind's benighted wit is
sought,
Shall in this age to Britain first be shown,
And hence be to admiring nations taught.

CLXII.

The ebbs of tides and their mysterious flow,
We, as arts' elements, shall understand,
And as by line upon the ocean go,
Whose paths shall be familiar as the land.

CLXIII.

Instructed ships shall sail to quick com-
merce, ‡
By which remotest regions are allied ; 650
Which makes one city of the universe ;
Where some may gain, and all may be
supplied.

CLXIV.

Then we upon our globe's last verge shall go,
And view the ocean leaning on the sky :
From thence our rolling neighbours we
shall know,
And on the lunar world securely pry.

† *Beyond the year, and out of heaven's high
way* "Extra anni, solisque vias."—VIRG. Ori-
ginal edition.

‡ By a more exact knowledge of longitudes.
Original edition.

CLXV.

This I foretell from your auspicious care,*
Who great in search of God and nature
grow ;

Who best your wise Creator's praise declare,
Since best to praise His works is best to
know. 690

CLXVI.

O truly royal ! who behold the law
And rule of beings in your Maker's mind :
And thence, like limbecs, rich ideas draw,
To fit the levelled use of human-kind.

CLXVII.

But first the toils of war we must endure,
And from th' injurious Dutch redeem the
seas.

War makes the valiant of his right secure,
And gives up fraud to be chastised with
ease.

CLXVIII.

Already were the Belgians on our coast,
Whose fleet more mighty every day
became 690

By late success, which they did falsely boast,
And now by first appearing seemed to
claim.

CLXIX.

Designing, subtle, diligent, and close,
They knew to manage war with wise
delay :

Yet all those arts their vanity did cross,
And by their pride their prudence did
betray.

CLXX.

Nor stayed the English long ; but well
supplied,

Appear as numerous as th' insulting foe :
The combat now by courage must be tried,
And the success the braver nation
show. 690

CLXXI.

There was the Plymouth squadron new
come in,
Which in the Straits last winter was
abroad ;

Which twice on Biscay's working bay had
been,
And on the midland sea the French had
awed.

CLXXII.

Old expert Allen,† loyal all along,
Famed for his action on the Smyrna fleet :
And Holmes, whose name shall live in epic
song,
While music numbers, or while verse has
feet.

CLXXIII.

Holmes, the Achates‡ of the general's fight ;
Who first bewitched our eyes with Guinea
gold : 690
As once old Cato in the Roman sight
The tempting fruits of Afric did unfold.

CLXXIV.

With him went Sprag,§ as bountiful as
brave,
Whom his high courage to command had
brought :
Harman,|| who did the twice-fired Harry
save,
And in his burning ship undaunted fought.

† Sir Thomas Allen, admiral of the white. He
defeated the Dutch fleet at Cadiz.

‡ *Holmes, the Achates of the, &c.* Sir Robert
Holmes, rear-admiral of the white, called the
Achates from his eagerness to support the general,
his devoted friend.

§ Sir Edward Spragge or Sprag served under
Sir Jeremiah Smith, who carried the blue flag :
he was drowned passing from one ship to another,
in a fight with Van Tromp, on the 11th of August
1672.

|| Ver. 695. *Harman, who did the twice-
fired, &c.*

"Albrough, June 2. This day is come in
hither the *Henry*, Captain Harman, commander,
who parted from the fleet, much disabled, at nine
o'clock last night, having had the luck, it seems,
to have a great part of the Dutch fleet upon her
singly, which she supported bravely, and forced
her way quite through them, though not without
much damage, which the enemy finding, en-
deavoured to clap a fire-ship upon her, but she
nimble struck him off : after which comes up one
of their admirals, and fastened a second fire-ship,
with which she grappled long, but at last took
fire in one of her quarters, which yet she
happily quenched. After this a third fire-ship
was laid on her, which, disabled as she was, she
so mauled with her chase-pieces, that she cut
short her main-yard, and so escaped him. She

* Apostrophe to the Royal Society. Original
edition.

CLXXV.

Young Hollis on a muse by Mars begot,
Born, Cæsar-like, to write and act great
deeds :

Impatient to revenge his fatal shot,
His right hand doubly to his left
succeeds.* 700

CLXXVI.

Thousands were there in darker fame that
dwell,

Whose deeds some nobler poem shall
adorn :

And, though to me unknown, they sure
fought well,

Whom Rupert led, and who were British
born.

CLXXVII.

Of every size an hundred fighting sail :
So vast the navy now at anchor rides,
That underneath it the pressed waters fail,
And with its weight it shoulders off the
tides.

CLXXVIII.

Now, anchors weighed, the seamen shout
so shrill,

That heaven, and earth, and the wide
ocean rings : 710

A breeze from westward waits their sails to
fill,

And rests in those high beds his downy
wings.

CLXXIX.

The wary Dutch this gathering storm fore-
saw,

And durst not bide it on the English
coast :

Behind their treacherous shallows they with-
draw,

And there lay snares to catch the British
host.

CLXXX.

So the false spider, when her nets are spread,
Deep ambushed in her silent den does lie ;

had several of her men killed and wounded ;
amongst these latter is the captain himself, but
it is hoped without danger. *London Gazette*,
June 3, 1666.

* He lost his left arm in the battle of June 3,
1665.

And feels far off the trembling of her thread,
Whose filmy cord should bind the strug-
gling fly. 720

CLXXXI.

Then if at last she find him fast beset,
She issues forth, and runs along her loom :
She joys to touch the captive in her net,
And drag the little wretch in triumph
home.

CLXXXII.

The Belgians hoped, that, with disordered
haste,

Our deep-cut keels upon the sands might
run :

Or, if with caution leisurely were past,
Their numerous gross might charge us one
by one.

CLXXXIII.

But with a fore-wind pushing them above, '
And swelling tide that heaved them from
below, 730

O'er the blind flats our warlike squadrons
move,

And with spread sails to welcome battle
go.

CLXXXIV.

It seemed as there the British Neptune
stood,

With all his host of waters at command
Beneath them to submit th' officious flood,
And with his trident† shoved them off
the sand.

CLXXXV.

To the pale foes they suddenly draw near,
And summon them to unexpected fight :

They start like murderers when ghosts
appear,

And draw their curtains in the dead of
night. 740

CLXXXVI.

Now van to van the foremost squadrons
meet,†

The midmost battles hasting up behind :
Who view far off the storm of falling sleet,
And hear their thunder rattling in the
wind.

† "Levat ipse tridentis, et vastas aperit syrtes,"
&c.—VIRG. Original edition.

† Second battle. Original edition.

CLXXXVII.

At length the adverse admirals appear ;
 The two bold champions of each country's
 right
 Their eyes describe the lists as they come
 near,
 And draw the lines of death before they
 fight.

CLXXXVIII.

The distance judged for shot of every size,
 The lintstocks touch, the ponderous ball
 expires : 780
 The vigorous seaman every port-hole plies,
 And adds his heart to every gun he fires !

CLXXXIX.

Fierce was the fight on the proud Belgians'
 side,
 For honour, which they seldom fought
 before :
 But now they by their own vain boasts were
 tied,
 And forced, at least in show, to prize it
 more.

CXC.

But sharp remembrance on the English part,
 And shame of being matched by such a
 foe,
 Rouse conscious virtue up in every heart,
 And seeming to be stronger makes them
 so.* 780

CXCI.

Nor long the Belgians could that fleet sus-
 tain,
 Which did two generals' fates and
 Caesar's bear :
 Each several ship a victory did gain,
 As Rupert or as Albemarle were there.

CXCI.

Their battered admiral too soon withdrew,
 Unthanked by ours for his unfinished
 fight :
 But he the minds of his Dutch masters
 knew,
 Who called that Providence which we
 called flight.

* "Possunt, quia posse videntur."—VIRG.
 Original edition.

CXCI.

Never did men more joyfully obey,
 Or sooner understood the sign to fly: 770
 With such alacrity they bore away,
 As if to praise them all the States stood by.

CXCV.

O famous leader of the Belgian fleet,
 Thy monument inscribed such praises shall
 wear,
 As Varro timely flying once did meet,
 Because he did not of his Rome despair.

CXCV.

Behold that navy, which a while before
 Provoked the tardy English to the fight ;
 Now draw their beaten vessels close to shore,
 As larks lie dared † to shun the hobby's
 flight. 780

CXCVI.

Whoe'er would English monuments survey,
 In other records may our courage know :
 But let them hide the story of this day,
 Whose fame was blemished by too base
 a foe.

CXCVII.

Or if too busily they will enquire
 Into a victory, which we disdain ;
 'Then let them know, the Belgians did retire
 Before the patron saint ‡ of injured Spain.

CXCVIII.

Repenting England this revengeful day §
 To Philip's manes || did an offering
 bring : 780
 England, which first, by leading them astray,
 Hatched up rebellion to destroy her king.

† To *dare* is to frighten larks and catch them
 by means of looking-glasses ; a "hobby" is a
 kind of falcon.

‡ St. James, on whose day this victory was
 gained. Orig. ed. This victory was won on the
 twenty-fifth of July, a day sacred to St. James
 the Great, patron of Spain. Spain is called
 "injured" because the Netherlands had rebelled
 against the cruel sway of Philip II.

§ Dryden takes the Spanish view of the
 Netherlands' rebellion ; neither a patriotic nor
 just one.

|| *Philip's manes*.] Philip II. of Spain, against
 whom the Hollanders rebelling, were aided by
 Queen Elizabeth. Orig. ed.

CXCIX.

Our fathers bent their baneful industry,
To check a monarchy that slowly grew ;
But did not France or Holland's fate foresee,
Whose rising power to swift dominion
flew.

CC.

In fortune's empire blindly thus we go,
And wander after pathless destiny ;
Whose dark resorts since prudence cannot
know,
In vain it would provide for what shall
be.

800

CCI.

But whate'er English to the blest shall go,
And the fourth Harry or first Orange
meet ;
Find him disowning of a Bourbon foe,
And him detesting a Batavian fleet.

CCII.

Now on their coasts our conquering navy
rides,
Waylays their merchants, and their land
besets ;
Each day new wealth without their care
provides ;
They lie asleep with prizes in their nets.

CCIII.

So, close behind some promontory lie
The huge leviathans to attend their
prey ;
And give no chace, but swallow in the fry,
Which through their gaping jaws mistake
the way.

810

CCIV.*

Nor was this all ; in ports and roads remote,
Destructive fires among whole fleets we
send ;
Triumphant flames upon the water float,
And out-bound ships at home their
voyage end.

CCV.

Those various squadrons, variously de-
signed,
Each vessel freighted with a several load,
Each squadron waiting for a several wind
All find but one, to burn them in the
road.

820

CCVI.

Some bound for Guinea, golden sand to find,
Bore all the gauds the simple natives wear ;
Some, for the pride of Turkish courts de-
signed,
For folded turbans finest holland bear.

CCVII.

Some English wool, vexed in a Belgian loom,
And into cloth of spongy softness made,
Did into France or colder Denmark doom,
To ruin with worse ware our staple trade.

CCVIII.

Our greedy seamen rummage every hold,
Smile on the booty of each wealthier
chest ;
And, as the priests who with their gods
make bold,
Take what they like, and sacrifice the
rest.

830

CCIX.†

But ah ! how insincere are all our joys !
Which sent from heaven, like lightning
make no stay :
Their palling taste the journey's length
destroys,
Or grief, sent post, o'ertakes them on the
way.

CCX.

Swelled with our late successes on the foe,
Which France and Holland wanted power
to cross,
We urge an unseen fate to lay us low,
And feed their envious eyes with English
loss.

840

* Burning of the fleet in the Uly, by Sir
Robert Holmes Orig. ed.

† *Transitum* to the fire of London. Orig. ed.

CCXI.

Each element His dread command obeys,
 Who makes or ruins with a smile or frown;
 Who, as by one He did our nation raise,
 So now He with another pulls us down.

CCXII.

Yet, London, empress of the northern clime,
 By an high fate thou greatly didst expire;
 Great as the world's, which at the death of
 time *
 Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire!

CCXIII.

As when some dire usurper heaven provides,
 To scourge his country with a lawless
 sway; 850
 His birth perhaps some petty village hides,
 And sets his cradle out of fortune's way.

CCXIV.

Till fully ripe his swelling fate breaks out,
 And hurries him to mighty mischiefs on;
 His prince, surprised at first no ill could
 doubt,
 And wants the power to meet it when 'tis
 known.

CCXV.

Such was the rise of this prodigious fire,
 Which, in mean buildings first obscurely
 bred,
 From thence did soon to open streets aspire,
 And straight to palaces and temples
 spread. 860

CCXVI.

The diligence of trade and noiseful gain,
 And luxury more late, asleep were laid:
 All was the night's; and in her silent reign
 No sound the rest of nature did invade.

CCXVII.

In this deep quiet, from what source un-
 known,
 Those seeds of fire their fatal birth dis-
 close;

And first few scattering sparks about were
 blown,
 Big with the flames that to our ruin rose.

CCXVIII.

Then in some close-pent room it crept along,
 And smouldering as it went, in silence
 fed; 870
 Till th' infant monster, with devouring strong,
 Walked boldly upright with exalted head.

CCXIX.

Now like some rich or mighty murderer,
 Too great for prison, which he breaks
 with gold;
 Who fresher for new mischiefs does appear,
 And dares the world to tax him with the
 old:

CCXX.

So 'scapes th' insulting fire his narrow jail,
 And makes small outlets into open air:
 There the fierce winds his tender force assail,
 And beat him downward to his first
 repair. 880

CCXXI.

The winds, like crafty courtesans,† withheld
 His flames from burning, but to blow
 them more:
 And every fresh attempt he is repelled
 With faint denials weaker than before.

CCXXII.

And now, no longer letted‡ of his prey,
 He leaps up at it with enraged desire:
 O'erlooks the neighbours with a wide survey,
 And nods at every house his threatening
 fire.

CCXXIII.

The ghosts of traitors from the bridge
 descend,
 With bold fanatic spectres to rejoice: 890
 About the fire into a dance they bend,
 And sing their sabbath notes with feeble
 voice.

† "Hæc arte tractabat virum,
 Ut illius animum cupidum inopia accenderet."
 TERENCE.

Orig. ed. Corrected by W. D. Christie, Esq.

‡ Hindered from seizing.

* "Quum mare, quum tellus, correptaque
 regia cœli,
 Ardeat," &c.—OVID. Orig. ed.

CCXXIV.

Our guardian angel saw them where they
sate
Above the palace of our slumbering
king;
He sighed, abandoning his charge to fate,
And, drooping, oft looked back upon the
wing.

CCXXV.

At length the crackling noise and dreadful
blaze
Called up some waking lover to the sight;
And long it was ere he the rest could raise,
Whose heavy eyelids yet were full of
night. 900

CCXXVI.

The next to danger, hot pursued by fate,
Half-clothed, half-naked, hastily retire:
And frighted mothers strike their breasts
too late,
For helpless infants left amidst the fire.

CCXXVII.

Their cries soon waken all the dwellers near
Now murmuring noises rise in every
street;
The more remote run stumbling with their
fear,
And, in the dark, men jostle as they meet.

CCXXVIII.

So weary bees in little cells repose;
But if night-robbers lift the well-stored
hive, 910
An humming through their waxen city grows,
And out upon each other's wings they
drive.

CCXXIX.

Now streets grow thronged and busy as by
day:
Some run for buckets to the hallowed
quiere:
Some cut the pipes, and some the engines
play;
And some more bold mount ladders to
the fire.

CCXXX.

In vain: for from the East a Belgian wind,
His hostile breath through the dry rafters
sent;
The flames impelled soon left their foes
behind,
And forward with a wanton fury went. 920

CCXXXI.

A key of fire ran all along the shore,
And lightened all the river with a blaze: *
The wakened tides began again to roar,
And wondering fish in shining waters gaze.

CCXXXII.

Old father Thames raised up his reverend †
head,
But feared the fate of Simois would return:
Deep in his ooze he sought his sedgy bed,
And shrunk his waters back into his urn.

CCXXXIII.

The fire, mean time, walks in a broader
gross;
To either hand his wings he opens
wide: 930
He wades the streets, and straight he
reaches cross,
And plays his longing flames on th' other
side.

CCXXXIV.

At first they warm, then scorch, and then
they take;
Now with long necks from side to side
they feed:
At length, grown strong, their mother fire
forsake,
And a new colony of flames succeed.

* "Sigæa igni freta lata relucet."—VIRG.
Orig. ed.

† An allusion to the 21st book of Homer, where
Vulcan dried up the allied streams of Simois and
Scamander.—JOHN WARTON.

The Scamander was opposed to Achilles, and
called in the aid of the Simois against him, but
Vulcan in defence of the hero dried up both the
rivers.

CCXXXV.

To every nobler portion of the town
The curling billows roll their restless tide :
In parties now they straggle up and down,
As armies, unopposed, for prey divide. 940

CCXXXVI.

One mighty squadron with a side-wind sped,
Through narrow lanes his cumbered fire
does haste,
By powerful charms of gold and silver led,
The Lombard bankers and the Change to
waste.

CCXXXVII.

Another backward to the Tower would go,
And slowly eats his way against the wind :
But the main body of the marching foe
Against th' imperial palace is designed.

CCXXXVIII.*

Now day appears, and with the day the
King,
Whose early care had robbed him of his
rest : 950
Far off the cracks of falling houses ring,
And shrieks of subjects pierce his tender
breast.

CCXXXIX.

Near as he draws, thick harbingers of smoke
With gloomy pillars cover all the
place ;
Whose little intervals of night are broke
By sparks, that drive against his sacred
face.

CCXL.

More than his guards his sorrows made him
known,
And pious tears which down his cheeks
did shower :
The wretched in his grief forgot their own ;
So much the pity of a king has power. 960

CCXLI.

He wept the flames of what he loved so well,
And what so well had merited his love :
For never prince in grace did more excel,
Or royal city more in duty strove.

CCXLII.

Nor with an idle care did he behold :
Subjects may grieve, but monarchs must
redress ;
He cheers the fearful and commends the
bold,
And makes despairers hope for good
success.

CCXLIII.

Himself directs what first is to be done,
And orders all the succours which they
bring : 970
The helpful and the good about him run,
And form an army worthy such a king.

CCXLIV.

He sees the dire contagion spread so fast,
That where it seizes, all relief is vain :
And therefore must unwillingly lay waste
That country, which would else the foe
maintain.

CCXLV.

The powder blows up all before the fire :
The amazed flames stand gathered on a
heap ;
And from the precipice's brink retire,
Afraid to venture on so large a leap. 980

CCXLVI.

Thus fighting fires a while themselves con-
sume,
But straight like Turks, forced on to win
or die,
They first lay tender bridges of their fume,
And o'er the preach in unctuous vapours
fly.

CCXLVII.

Part stays for passage, till a gust of wind
Ships o'er their forces in a shining sheet ;

* Vivid pictures of the Great Fire are given in Evelyn and Pepys's diaries. The King and the Duke of York deserve all praise for what they did to check it.

Part creeping under ground their journey
blind,
And climbing from below their fellows
meet.

CCXLVIII.

Thus to some desert plain, or old wood-side,
Dire night-hags come from far to dance
their round ; 990

And o'er broad rivers on their fiends they
ride,
Or sweep in clouds' above the blasted
ground.

CCXLIX.

No help avails : for, hydra-like, the fire
Lifts up his hundred heads to aim his
way :
And scarce the wealthy can one half retire,
Before he rushes in to share the prey.

CCL.

The rich grow suppliant, and the poor grow
proud :
Those offer mighty gain, and these ask
more :

So void of pity is th' ignoble crowd,
When others' ruin may increase their
store. 1000

CCLI.

As those, who live by shores, with joy be-
hold *

Some wealthy vessel split or stranded
nigh ;
And from the rocks leap down for ship-
wrecked gold,
And seek the tempest which the others
fly :

CCLII.

So these but wait the owner's last despair,
And what's permitted to the flames invade ;
Ev'n from their jaws they hungry morsels
tear,
And on their backs the spoils of Vulcan
lade.

* An allusion to the barbarous Cornish wreckers
of that age.

CCLIII.

The days were all in this lost labour spent ;
And when the weary king gave place to
night 1010
His beams he to his royal brother lent,
And so shone still in his reflective light.

CCLIV.

Night came, but without darkness or repose,
A dismal picture of the general doom ;
Where souls distracted when the trumpet
blows,
And half unready with their bodies come.

CCLV.

Those who have homes, when home they
do repair,
'To a last lodging call their wandering
friends :

Their short uneasy sleeps are broke with
care,
To look how near their own destruction
tends. 1020

CCLVI.

Those who have none, sit round where once
it was,
And with full eyes each wonted room re-
quire :
Haunting the yet warm ashes of the place,
As murdered men walk where they did
expire.

CCLVII.

Some stir up coals and watch the vestal fire,
Others in vain from sight of ruin run ;
And while through burning labyrinths they
retire,
With loathing eyes repeat what they would
shun.

CCLVIII.

The most in fields like herded beasts lie down,
To dews obnoxious on the grassy
floor ; 1030
And while their babes in sleep their sorrows
drown,
Sad parents watch the remnants of their
store.

CCLIX.

While by the motion of the flames they guess
 What streets are burning now, and what
 are near,
 An infant waking to the paps would press,
 And meets instead of milk, a falling tear.

CCLX.

No thought can ease them but their sove-
 reign's care,
 Whose praise the afflicted as their com-
 fort sing :
 E'en those whom want might drive to just
 despair,
 Think life a blessing under such a
 king. 1040

CCLXI.

Meantime he sadly suffers in their grief,
 Out-weeps an hermit, and out-prays a
 saint :
 All the night long he studies their relief,
 How they may be supplied, and he may
 want.

CCLXII.

"O God," said he, "Thou patron of my
 days,*
 Guide of my youth in exile and distress !
 Who me unfriended brought by wond'rous
 ways,
 The kingdom of my fathers to possess :

CCLXIII.

"Be Thou my judge, with what unwearied
 care
 I since have laboured for my people's
 good ; 1060
 To bind the bruises of a civil war,
 And stop the issues of their wasting blood.

CCLXIV.

"Thou, who hast taught me to forgive the ill,
 And recompense, as friends, the good
 mislaid ;
 If mercy be a precept of Thy will,
 Return that mercy on Thy servant's head.

CCLXV.

"Or if my heedless youth has stept astray,
 Too soon forgetful of Thy gracious hand ;
 On me alone Thy just displeasure lay,
 But take Thy judgments from this mourn-
 ing land. 1080

CCLXVI.

"We all have sinned, and Thou hast laid
 us low,
 As humble earth from whence at first we
 came :
 Like flying shades before the clouds we show,
 And shrink like parchment in consuming
 flame.

CCLXVII.

"O let it be enough what Thou hast done ;
 When spotted deaths ran armed through
 every street,
 With poisoned darts which not the good
 could shun,
 The speedy could out-fly, or valiant meet.

CCLXVIII.

"The living few, and frequent funerals then,
 Proclaimed Thy wrath on this forsaken
 place : 1070
 And now those few, who are returned again,
 Thy searching judgments to their dwell-
 ings trace.

CCLXIX.

"O pass not, Lord, an absolute decree,
 Or bind Thy sentence unconditional :
 But in Thy sentence our remorse foresee,
 And in that foresight this Thy doom recall.

CCLXX.

"Thy threatenings, Lord, as Thine Thou
 mayst revoke :
 But, if immutable and fixed they stand,
 Continue still Thyself to give the stroke,
 And let not foreign foes oppress Thy
 land." 1080

CCLXXI.

Th' Eternal heard, and from the heavenly
 quire
 Chose out the cherub with the flaming
 sword ;

* King's prayer. Original edition.

And bade him swiftly drive th' approaching
fire
From where our naval magazines were
stored.

CCLXXII.

The blessed minister his wings displayed,
And like a shooting star he cleft the night ;
He charged the flames, and those that dis-
obeyed
He lashed to duty with his sword of light.

CCLXXIII.

The fugitive flames, chastised, went forth
to prey
On pious structures, by our fathers
reared ;
By which to heaven they did affect the way,
Ere faith in churchmen without works
was heard.

CCLXXIV.

The wanting orphans saw with watery eyes
Their founders' charity in dust laid
low ;
And sent to God their ever-answered cries,
For He protects the poor who made them
so.

CCLXXV.

Nor could thy fabric, Paul's, defend thee
long,
Though thou wert sacred to thy Maker's
praise :
Though made immortal by a poet's song ;
And poets' songs the Theban walls could
raise,

CCLXXVI.

The daring flames peeped in, and saw from
far
The awful beauties of the sacred quire :
But, since it was profaned by civil war,*
Heaven thought it fit to have it purged
by fire.

CCLXXVII.

Now down the narrow streets it swiftly
came,
And widely opening did on both sides
prey ; †
This benefit we sadly owe the flame,
If only ruin must enlarge our way.

CCLXXVIII.

And now four days the sun had seen our
woes ;
Four nights the moon beheld th' incessant
fire :
It seemed as if the stars more sickly rose,
And farther from the feverish north retire.

CCLXXIX.

In th' empyrean heaven, the blessed abode,
The thrones and the dominions prostrate
lie,
Not daring to behold their angry God ;
And an hushed silence damps the tune-
ful sky.

CCLXXX.

At length th' Almighty cast a pitying eye,
And mercy softly touched His melting
breast :
He saw the town's one half in rubbish lie,
And eager flames drove on to storm the
rest.

CCLXXXI.

A hollow crystal pyramid He takes,
In firmamental waters dipt above ;
Of it a broad extinguisher He makes,
And hoods the flames that to their quarry
strove.

CCLXXXII.

The vanquished fires withdraw from every
place,
Or full with feeding sink into a sleep :
Each household genius shows again his face,
And from the earth the little Lares creep.

* The troopers of Cromwell stabled their horses
in the church.

† The widening of the streets was a great
benefit.

CCLXXXIII.

Our king this more than natural change
 beholds;
 With sober joy his heart and eyes
 abound: 1130
 To the All-good his lifted hands he folds,
 And thanks Him low on His redeemed
 ground.

CCLXXXIV.

As when sharp frosts had long constrained
 the earth,
 A kindly thaw unlocks it with mild rain;
 And first the tender blade peeps up to birth,
 And straight the green fields laugh with
 promised grain:

CCLXXXV.

By such degrees the spreading gladness grew
 In every heart which fear had froze before:
 The standing streets with so much joy they
 view
 That with less grief the perished they
 deplore. 1140

CCLXXXVI.*

The father of the people opened wide
 His stores, and all the poor with plenty fed;
 Thus God's anointed God's own place
 supplied,
 And filled the empty with his daily
 bread.

CCLXXXVII.

This royal bounty brought its own reward,
 And in their minds so deep did print the
 sense,
 That if their ruins sadly they regard,
 'Tis but with fear the sight might drive
 him thence.

* The poor people that were burnt out built huts and sheds of boards for shelter in Moorfields, and other outlets of the city; and the King was often seen among them, inquiring into their wants, and doing everything in his power to comfort them. He moreover ordered the justices of the peace to see them supplied with food, and to be careful of preventing forestallers from taking advantage of their distresses; besides which, he commanded that the biscuits and other provisions, laid up in the Tower for the use of his army and navy, should be carried out and distributed among them.—DERRICK.

CCLXXXVIII.

But so may he live long, that town to sway,
 Which by his auspice they will nobler
 make, 1150
 As he will hatch their ashes by his stay,
 And not their humble ruins now forsake.†

CCLXXXIX.

They have not lost their loyalty by fire;
 Nor is their courage or their wealth so
 low,
 That from his wars they poorly would retire,
 Or beg the pity of a vanquished foe.

CCXC.

Not with more constancy the Jews of old,
 By Cyrus from rewarded exile sent,
 Their royal city did in dust behold,
 Or with more vigour to rebuild it
 went. 1160

CCXCI.

The utmost malice of their stars is past,‡
 And two dire comets, which have scourged
 the town,
 In their own plague and fire have breathed
 their last,
 Or dimly in their sinking sockets
 frown.

CCXCII.

Now frequent trines the happier lights
 among,
 And high-raised Jove, from his dark
 prison freed,
 Those weights took off that on his planet
 hung,
 Will gloriously the new-laid work succeed.

CCXCIII.

Methinks already, from this chymic flame,
 I see a city of more precious mould: 1170
 Rich as the town,§ which gives the Indies
 name,
 With silver paved, and all divine with gold.

† City's request to the King not to leave them.
 Original edition.

‡ Dryden was a believer in astrology.

§ Mexico. Original edition.

CCXCIV.

Already, labouring with a mighty fate,
 She shakes the rubbish from her mount-
 ing brow,
 And seems to have renewed her charter's
 date,
 Which heaven will to the death of time
 allow.

CCXCV.

More great than human now, and more
 august,*
 Now deified she from her fires does rise :
 Her widening streets on new foundations
 trust,
 And, opening, into larger parts she
 flies. 1180

CCXCVI.

Before, she like some shepherdess did show,
 Who sat to bathe her by a river's side ;
 Not answering to her fame, but rude and
 low,
 Nor taught the beauteous arts of modern
 pride.

CCXCVII.

Now, like a maiden queen, she will behold,
 From her high turrets, hourly suitors
 come :
 East with incense, and the West with
 glory,
 Will stand, like suppliants, to receive her
 doom.

CCXCVIII.

The silver Thames, her own domestic flood,
 Shall bear her vessels like a sweeping
 train ; 1190
 And, often wind, as of his mistress proud,
 With longing eyes to meet her face again.

CCXCIX.

The wealthy Tagus, and the wealthier Rhine,
 The glory of their towns no more shall
 boast,

And Seine, that would with Belgian rivers
 join,
 Shall find her lustre stained, and traffic
 lost.

CCC.

The venturous merchant who designed
 more far,
 And touches on our hospitable shore,
 Charmed with the splendour of this northern
 star,
 Shall here unlade him, and depart no
 more. 1200

CCCI.

Our powerful navy shall no longer meet,
 The wealth of France or Holland to in-
 vade :
 The beauty of this town, without a fleet,
 From all the world shall vindicate her
 trade.

CCCII.

And, while this famed emporium we pre-
 pare,
 The British ocean shall such triumphs
 boast,
 That those who now disdain our trade to
 share,
 Shall rob like pirates on our wealthy coast.

CCCIII.

Already we have conquered half the war,
 And the less dangerous part is left be-
 hind : 1210
 Our trouble now is but to make them
 dare,
 And not so great to vanquish as to find.

CCCIV.

Thus to the eastern wealth through storms
 we go,
 But now, the Cape once doubled, fear no
 more :
 A constant trade-wind will securely blow,
 And gently lay us on the spicy shore.

* *Augusta*, the old name of London. Original
 edition.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

A POEM.

PART I.

" Si propius stes

'Te capiat magis."—HORACE, *Ars Poet.* 361.

NOTE.

This powerful Satire was, it is said, written by the command of Charles II., Dryden being then Poet Laureate. The kingdom was at the time in a perfect ferment of party hate and abuse. "Every day produced new libels and disloyal pamphlets," says Derrick; and the King wisely chose the great poet to stem the current of disloyalty.

Absalom represents the illegitimate son of Charles II., the weak and unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, most of whose misfortunes were brought on him by the evil influence of Shaftesbury, who is the Achitophel of the Satire.

Full of ambition and a bigoted Protestant, the Earl of Shaftesbury found in the King's favourite son an apt tool to carry out his own views, and to injure his hated enemy the Duke of York. Shaftesbury had believed, or pretended to believe, in the infamous Plot invented by Titus Oates; he next pretended belief in the rumour that Charles had actually married Monmouth's mother, Lucy Walters, and he persuaded the young man that he—Monmouth—was rightful heir to the crown. The King had sent the Duke abroad to remove him from evil influences, but, at Shaftesbury's suggestion, he returned to England without the royal consent; and, with the Earl, made a solemn progress through several counties of the west and north, spreading everywhere disaffection against the royal government. After Charles had dissolved the Parliament which was about to pass a Bill of Exclusion against the Duke of York, he sent Shaftesbury to the Tower, to take his trial for high treason; but the Earl was saved by the Grand Jury throwing out or ignoring the bill against him. He died soon after.

The fate of Monmouth is well known. He was defeated at Sedgemoor, and beheaded in his thirty-sixth year on Tower Hill for his rebellion against James II.

TO THE READER.

'Tis not my intention to make an apology for my poem : some will think it needs no excuse, and others will receive none. The design I am sure is honest ; but he who draws his pen for one party, must expect to make enemies of the other. For wit and fool are consequents of Whig and Tory ; * and every man is a knave or an ass to the contrary side. There is a treasury of merits in the Fanatic Church, as well as in the Popish ; and a pennyworth to be had of saintship, honesty, and poetry, for the lewd, the factious, and the blockheads : but the longest chapter in Deuteronomy has not curses enough for an Anti-Bromingham.† My comfort is, their manifest prejudice to my cause will render their judgment of less authority against me. Yet if a poem have a genius, it will force its own reception in the world. For there's a sweetness in good verse, which tickles even while it hurts ; and no man can be heartily angry with him who pleases him against his will. The commendation of adversaries is the greatest triumph of a writer, because it never comes unless extorted. But I can be satisfied on more easy terms : if I happen to please the more moderate sort, I shall be sure of an honest party, and, in all probability, of the best judges ; for the least concerned are commonly the least corrupt. And I confess I have laid in for those, by rebating the satire (where justice would allow it), from carrying too sharp an edge. They, who can criticise so weakly as to imagine I have done my worst, may be convinced, at their own cost, that I can write severely, with more ease, than I can gently. I have but laughed at some men's follies, when I could have declaimed against their vices ; and other men's virtues I have commended, as freely as I have taxed their crimes. And now, if you are a malicious reader, I expect you should return upon me that I affect to be thought more impartial than I am. But if men are not to be judged by their professions, God forgive you Commonwealth's-men for professing so plausibly for the government. You cannot be so unconscionable as to charge me for not subscribing of my name,‡ for that would reflect too grossly upon your own party, who never dare, though they have the advantage of a jury to secure them. If you like not my poem, the fault may, possibly, be in my writing (though 'tis hard for an author to judge against himself) ; but, more probably, 'tis in your morals, which cannot bear the truth of it. The violent, on both sides, will condemn the character of Absalom, as either too favourably or too hardly drawn. But they are not the violent whom I desire to please. The fault on the right hand is to extenuate, palliate,* and indulge ; and, to confess freely, I have endeavoured to commit it. Besides the respect which I owe his birth, I have a greater for his heroic virtues ; and David himself could

* The terms Whig and Tory were then first used. Tories were actually Irish banditti. "Whig" was a name given originally to the Scotch Covenanters at "the Whiggamores' Raid."

† An Anti-Whig, *i.e.*, counterfeit Whig

‡ This poem was published anonymously, but the author was well known.

not be more tender of the young man's life, than I would be of his reputation. But since the most excellent natures are always the most easy, and, as being such, are the soonest perverted by ill counsels, especially when baited with fame and glory; 'tis no more a wonder that he withstood not the temptations of Achitophel, than it was for Adam not to have resisted the two devils, the serpent and the woman. The conclusion of the story I purposely forbore to prosecute, because I could not obtain from myself to show Absalom unfortunate. The frame of it was cut out but for a picture to the waist; and if the draught be so far true, 'tis as much as I designed.

Were I the inventor, who am only the historian, I should certainly conclude the piece with the reconciliation of Absalom to David. And who knows but this may come to pass? Things were not brought to an extremity where I left the story: there seems yet to be room left for a composure; hereafter there may be only for pity. I have not so much as an uncharitable wish against Achitophel, but am content to be accused of a good-natured error, and to hope with Origen, that the devil himself may at last be saved. For which reason, in this poem, he is neither brought to set his house in order, nor to dispose of his person afterwards as he in his wisdom shall think fit. God is infinitely merciful; and his viceregent is only not so, because he is not infinite.

The true end of satire is the amendment of vices by correction. And he who writes honestly, is no more an enemy to the offender, than the physician to the patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to an inveterate disease; for those are only in order to prevent the surgeon's work of an *Ense recidendum*, which I wish not to my very enemies. To conclude all; if the body politic have any analogy to the natural, in my weak judgment, an act of oblivion were as necessary in a hot distempered state, as an opiate would be in a raging fever.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

IN pious times ere priestcraft did begin,
 Before polgamy was made a sin ;
 When man on many multiplied his kind,
 Ere one to one was cursedly confined ;
 When nature prompted, and no law denied
 Promiscuous use of concubine and bride ;
 Then Israel's monarch * after Heaven's own
 heart,
 His vigorous warinth did variously impart
 To wives and slaves ; and wide as his com-
 mand
 Scattered his Maker's image through the
 land. 10
 Michal,† of royal blood, the crown did
 wear ;
 A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care :
 Not so the rest ; for several mothers bore
 To god-like David several sons before.
 But since like slaves his bed they did ascend,
 No true succession could their seed attend
 Of all this numerous progeny was none
 So beautiful, so brave, as Absalon : ‡
 Whether inspired by some diviner lust,
 His father got him with a greater gust : 20
 Or that his conscious destiny made way,
 By manly beauty, to imperial sway.
 Early in foreign fields§ he won renown,
 With kings and states allied to Israel's
 crown :

* David, under whose name Charles II. is indicated.

† Michal, of royal blood, is Katherine of Braganza, daughter of the King of Portugal.

‡ Monmouth, the son of Lucy Walters.

§ Monmouth was commended by Louis XIV. for his bravery at the siege of Maestricht. He also commanded the British contingent acting with the Dutch at St. Denis. He wanted not courage, but sense.

In peace the thoughts of war he could re-
 move,
 And seemed as he were only born for love.
 Whate'er he did, was done with so much
 ease,
 In him alone 'twas natural to please :
 His motions all accompanied with grace ;
 And paradise was opened in his face. 30
 With secret joy indulgent David viewed
 His youthful image in his son renewed :
 To all his wishes nothing he denied ;
 And made the charming Annabel || his bride.
 What faults he had, (for who from faults is
 free ?)

His father could not, or he would not see.
 Some warm excesses which the law forbore,
 Were construed youth that purged by boil-
 ing o'er,
 And Amnon's murder, by a specious name,
 Was called a just revenge for injured fame. 40
 Thus praised and loved, the noble youth
 remained,
 While David, undisturbed, in Sion reigned.
 But life can never be sincerely blest :
 Heaven punishes the bad, and proves the
 best.
 The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murmur-
 ing race, ¶
 As ever tried the extent and stretch of grace ;
 God's pampered people, whom debauched
 with ease,
 No king could govern, nor no god could
 please ;

|| Anne, the young heiress of Buccleuch. She was a warm friend and kind patroness of Dryden.
 ¶ The English people. Sion is London.

(Gods they had tried of every shape and size,

That god-smiths could produce, or priests devise :) 60

These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,

Began to dream they wanted liberty ;

And when no rule, no precedent was found,

Of men, by laws less circumscribed and bound,

They led their wild desires to woods and caves,

And thought that all but savages were slaves.

They who, when Saul * was dead without a blow

Made foolish Ishbosheth † the crown forego ;

Who banished David did from Hebron bring,

And with a general shout proclaimed him king : 60

Those very Jews, who, at their very best,

Their humour more than loyalty expressed,

Now wondered why so long they had obeyed

An idol monarch, which their hands had made ;

Thought they might ruin him they could create,

Or melt him to that golden calf—a state.

But these were random bolts : no formed design,

Nor interest made the factious crowd to join :

The sober part of Israel, free from stain,

Well knew the value of a peaceful reign ; 70

And, looking backward with a wise affright,

Saw seams of wounds dishonest to the sight :

In contemplation of whose ugly scars,

They cursed the memory of civil wars.

The moderate sort of men thus qualified,

Inclined the balance to the better side ;

And David's mildness managed it so well,

The bad found no occasion to rebel.

But when to sin our biassed nature leans,

The careful devil is still at hand with means ; 80

And providently pimps for ill desires :

The good old cause revived a plot requires.

Plots, true or false, are necessary things,
To raise up commonwealths, and ruin kings.

The inhabitants of old Jerusalem

Were Jebusites, ‡ the town so called from them ;

And theirs the native right——

But when the chosen people grew more strong,

The rightful cause at length became the wrong ;

And every loss the men of Jebus bore, 90

They still were thought God's enemies the more.

Thus worn or weakened, well or ill content,

Submit they must to David's government :

Impoverished and deprived of all command,

Their taxes doubled as they lost their land ;

And what was harder yet to flesh and blood,

Their gods disgraced, and burned like common wood.

This set the heathen priesthood in a flame ;

For priests of all religions are the same.

Of whatso'er descent their godhead be, 100

Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,

In his defence his servants are as bold,

As if he had been born of beaten gold,

The Jewish rabbins, though their enemies,

In this conclude them honest men and wise :

For 'twas their duty, all the learned think,

T' espouse his cause, by whom they eat and drink.

From hence began that Plot, § the nation's curse,

Bad in itself, but represented worse ;

Raised in extremes, and in extremes decried ; 110

With oaths affirmed, with dying vows denied ;

Not weighed, nor winnowed by the multitude ;

But swallowed in the mass, unchewed and crude,

Some truth there was, but dashed and brewed with lies,

To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise,

* *Saul*] Oliver Cromwell.

† *Ishbosheth*, &c.] Richard Cromwell.

‡ Roman Catholics.

§ Titus Oates's plot.

Succeeding times did equal folly call,
Believing nothing or believing all.
Th' Egyptian * rites the Jebusites embraced;
Where gods were recommended by their
taste.

Such savoury deities must needs be good, 120
As served at once for worship and for food.
By force they could not introduce these
gods;

For ten to one in former days was odds.
So fraud was used, the sacrificer's trade:
Fools are more hard to conquer than per-
suade.

Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews,
And raked for converts even the court and
stews:

Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly
took,

Because the fleece accompanies the flock.
Some thought they God's anointed meant
to slay 130

By guns, invented since full many a day:
Our author swears it not; but who can
know

How far the devil and Jebusites may go?
This plot, which failed for want of common
sense,

Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence;
For as when raging fevers boil the blood,
The standing lake soon floats into a flood,
And every hostile humour, which before
Slept quiet in its channels, bubbles o'er;
So several factions from this first fer-
ment, 140

Work up to foam, and threat the govern-
ment.

Some by their friends, more by themselves
thought wise,

Opposed the power to which they could not
rise,

Some had in courts been great, and thrown
from thence,

Like fiends were hardened in impenitence.
Some, by their monarch's fatal mercy, grown

From pardoned rebels kinsmen to the
throne,

Were raised in power and public office high;
Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men
could tie.

Of these the false Achitophel † was
first; 180

A name to all succeeding ages cursed:
For close designs, and crooked counsel fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfixed in principles and place;
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy-body ‡ to decay,
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay,
A daring pilot in extremity;

Pleased with the danger, when the waves
went high 190

He sought the storms; but for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his
wit.

Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else why should he, with wealth and honour
blest,

Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?

And all to leave what with his toil he won,
To that unfeathered two-legged thing, a
son; 170

Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.

In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolved to ruin or to rule the state,

To compass this the triple bond § he broke;
The pillars of the public safety shook;

And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke:

† *Achitophel* is the Earl of Shaftesbury, who
was the counsellor of the Duke of Monmouth.

‡ Lord Shaftesbury was an exceedingly small
man. He had been at one time high in the
King's favour and confidence, and had been a
member of the famous "Cabal" Ministry.
Charles once said to him, "Shaftesbury, you are
the greatest rogue in the nation;" the Earl
answered, "Of a subject, sir, I believe I am."

§ In the year 1667 a triple alliance was entered
into between England, Sweden, and Holland. It
was dissolved by the second Dutch war, which
Shaftesbury had advised. He also counselled a
closer connection with France, thus "fitting
Israel to a foreign yoke."

Then seized with fear, yet still affecting
fame,
Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves, in factious times,* 180
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's
will,
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be
known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own !
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge ;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the
judge.
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin†
With more discerning eyes, or hands more
clean,
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to re-
dress ; 180
Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.
Oh ! had he been content to serve the crown,
With virtues only proper to the gown ;
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cackle, that oppressed the noble seed ;
David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
And heaven had wanted one immortal song.
But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
Achitophel, grown weary to possess 200
A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
Disdained the golden fruit to gather free,
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
Now, manifest of crimes contrived long since,
He stood at bold defiance with his prince ;
Held up the buckler of the people's cause
Against the crown, and skulked behind the
laws.
The wished occasion of the Plot he takes ;
Some circumstances finds, but more he
makes.
By buzzing emissaries fills the ears 210
Of listening crowds with jealousies and fears

Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
And proves the King himself a Jebusite.
Weak arguments ! which yet he knew full
well,
Were strong with people easy to rebel.
For governed by the moon, the giddy Jews
Tread the same track when she the prime
renews ;
And once in twenty years, their scribes record,
By natural instinct they change their lord.
Achitophel still wants a chief, and none 220
Was found so fit as warlike Absalom.
Not that he wished his greatness to create,
For politicians neither love nor hate :
But, for he knew his title not allowed,
Would keep him still depending on the
crowd :
That kingly power, thus ebbing out, might be
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
Him he attempts with studied arts to please,
And sheds his venom in such words as these,
" Auspicious prince, at whose nativity 230
Some royal planet ruled the southern sky ;
Thy longing country's darling and desire ;
Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire :
Their second Moses, whose extended wand
Divides the seas, and shows the promised
land :
Whose dawning day in every distant age
Has exercised the sacred prophet's rage :
The people's prayer, the glad diviner's theme,
The young men's vision, and the old men's
dream !
Thee, Saviour, thee the nation's vows con-
fess, 240
And, never satisfied with seeing, bless :
Swift unbespoken pomps thy steps proclaim,
And stammering babes are taught to lisp
thy name.
How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
Starve and defraud the people of thy reign !
Content ingloriously to pass thy days,
Like one of virtue's fools that feed on praise ;
Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so
bright,
Grow stale, and tarnish with our daily sight !
Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be 250
Or gathered ripe, or rot upon the tree.

* The lines from 180 to 192 were added by Dryden to the second edition of the poem. In them he gives due praise to Lord Shaftesbury as a judge.

† A Lord Chancellor ; generally so called through this poem.

Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
Some lucky revolution of their fate :
Whose motions if we watch and guide with
skill,

(For human good depends on human will.)
Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent,
And from the first impression takes the bent :
But, if unseized, she glides away like wind,
And leaves repenting folly far behind.

Now, now she meets you with a glorious
prize, 260

And spreads her locks before her as she
flies.

Had thus old David, from whose lions you
spring,

Not dared when fortune called him to be king,
At Gath * an exile he might still remain,
And Heaven's anointing oil had been in vain.

Let his successful youth your hopes engage ;
But shun the example of declining age :

Behold him setting in his western skies,
The shadows lengthening as the vapours rise.
He is not now, as when on Jordan's sand 270

The joyful people thronged to see him land,
Covering the beach, and blackening all the
strand ;

But, like the prince of angels, from his height
Comes tumbling downward with diminished
light :

Betrayed by one poor plot to public scorn :
(Our only blessing since his cursed return :)
Those heaps of people which one sheaf did
bind,

Blown off and scattered by a puff of wind.
What strength can he to your designs oppose,
Naked of friends and round beset with
foes? 280

If Pharaoh's † doubtful succour he should
use,

A foreign aid would more incense the Jews.
Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship
bring ;

Foment the war, but not support the king :

Nor would the royal party e'er unite
With Pharaoh's arms to assist the Jebusite ;
Or if they should, their interest soon would
break,

And with such odious aid make David weak.
All sorts of men by my successful arts,
Abhorring kings, estrange their altered
hearts 290

From David's rule : and 'tis the general cry,
Religion, commonwealth, and liberty.

If you, as champion of the public good,
Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,
What may not Israel hope, and what applause
Might such a general gain by such a cause ?
Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower
Fair only to the sight, but solid power :

And nobler is a limited command,
Given by the love of all your native land, 300
Than a successive title, long and dark,
Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's ark."

What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
When flattery soothes, and when ambition
blinds ?

Desire of power, on earth a vicious weed,
Yet sprung from high is of celestial seed :
In God 'tis glory ; and when men aspire,
'Tis but a spark too much of heavenly fire.
The ambitious youth too covetous of fame,
Too full of angel's mettle in his frame, 310
Unwarily was led from virtue's ways,
Made drunk with honour, and debauched
with praise.

Half loth, and half consenting to the ill,
For loyal blood within him struggled still,
He thus replied : " And what pretence have I
To take up arms for public liberty ?
My father governs with unquestioned right ;
The faith's defender, and mankind's delight ;
Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws ;
And Heaven by wonders has espoused his
cause. 320

Whom has he wronged in all his peaceful
reign ?

Who sues for justice to his throne in vain ?
What millions has he pardoned of his foes,
Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose ?
Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good ;
Inclined to mercy, and averse from blood.

* Brussels, where Charles II. resided during
part of his exile.

† Pharaoh Louis XIV. of France ; France
is called Egypt.

If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,
His crime is God's beloved attribute.
What could he gain his people to betray,
Or change his right for arbitrary sway? 330
Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign
His fruitful Nile* and yoke a servile train.
If David's rule Jerusalem displease,
The dog-star heats their brains to this disease.
Why then should I, encouraging the bad,
Turn rebel and run popularly mad?
Were he a tyrant, who by lawless might
Oppressed the Jews and raised the Jebusite,
Well might I mourn; but nature's holy bands
Would curb my spirits and restrain my
hands: 340

The people might assert their liberty;
But what was right in them were crime in me.
His favour leaves me nothing to require,
Prevents my wishes, and outruns desire;
What more can I expect while David lives?
All but his kingly diadem he gives:
And that—" But there he paused; then
sighing, said—

"Is justly destined for a worthier head.
For when my father from his toils shall rest,
And late augment the number of the
blest, 350

His lawful issue shall the throne ascend,
Or the collateral line, where that shall end.
His brother, though oppressed with vulgar
spite,

Yet dauntless, and secure of native right,
Of every royal virtue stands possessed;
Still dear to all the bravest and the best.
His courage foes, his friends his truth pro-
claim;

His loyalty the king, the world his fame.
His mercy e'en the offending crowd will find;
For sure he comes of a forgiving kind. 360
Why should I then repine at Heaven's decree,
Which gives me no pretence to royalty?
Yet oh that fate, propitiously inclined,
Had raised my birth, or had debased my
mind;

To my large soul not all her treasure lent,
And then betrayed it to a mean descent!

I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,
And David's part disdains my mother's
mould.

Why am I scanted by a niggard birth?
My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth; 370
And, made for empire, whispers me within,
Desire of greatness is a god-like sin."

Him staggering so, when hell's dire agent
found,

While fainting virtue scarce maintained her
ground,

He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies:
"The eternal God, supremely good and wise,
Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain:
What wonders are reserved to bless your
reign!

Against your will your arguments have shown,
Such virtue's only given to guide a throne. 380
Not that your father's mildness I condemn;
But manly force becomes the diadem.

'Tis true he grants the people all they crave;
And more, perhaps, than subjects ought to
have:

For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame,
And more his goodness than his wit proclaim.
But when should people strive their bonds
to break,

If not when kings are negligent or weak?
Let him give on till he can give no more,
The thrifty Sanhedrim† shall keep him
poor; 390

And every shekel, which he can receive,
Shall cost a limb of his prerogative.
To ply him with new plots shall be my care;
Or plunge him deep in some expensive war;
Which when his treasure can no more
supply,

He must, with the remains of kingship, buy.
His faithful friends, our jealousies and fears
Call Jebusites, and Pharaoh's pensioners;
Whom when our fury from his aid has torn,
He shall be naked left to public scorn. 400
The next successor, whom I fear and hate,
My arts have made obnoxious to the state;
Turned all his virtues to his overthrow,
And gained our elders to pronounce a foe.

* *His fruitful Nile*] The Seine.

† *The thrifty Sanhedrim, &c.*] The Parliament.

His right, for suns of necessary gold,
Shall first be pawned, and afterwards be
sold;

Till time shall ever-wanting David draw,
To pass your doubtful title into law;
If not, the people have a right supreme
To make their kings; for kings are made
for them. 410

All empire is no more than power in trust,
Which, when resumed, can be no longer
just.

Succession, for the general good designed,
In its own wrong a nation cannot bind:
If altering that the people can relieve,
Better one suffer than a nation grieve.*

The Jews well know their power: ere Saul
they chose,

God was their king, and God they durst
depose.

Urge now your piety, your filial name,
A father's right, and fear of future fame; 420
The public good, that universal call,
To which e'en Heaven submitted, answers
all.

Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;
'Tis nature's trick to propagate her kind.

Our fond begetters, who would never die,
Love but themselves in their posterity.

Or let his kindness by the effects be tried,
Or let him lay his vain pretence aside.

God said, he loved your father; could he
bring

A better proof, than to anoint him king? 430
It surely showed he loved the shepherd well,
Who gave so fair a flock as Israel.

Would David have you thought his darling
son?

What means he then to alienate the crown?
The name of godly he may blush to
bear;

'Tis after God's own heart to cheat his heir.†
He to his brother gives supreme command,
To you a legacy of barren land;

* *Better one suffer than a nation grieve.*] First
edition: *million*.

† The first edition has—

"'Tis after God's own heart to cheat his heir."
Derrick altered the line to "It's."

Perhaps the old harp, on which he thrums
his lays,

Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your
praise. 440

Then the next heir, a prince severe and wise,
Already looks on you with jealous eyes;
Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,
And marks your progress in the people's
hearts;

Though now his mighty soul its grief con-
tains:

He meditates revenge who least complains;
And like a lion, slumbering in the way,
Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
His fearless foes within his distance draws,
Constrains his roaring, and contracts his
paws; 450

Till at the last, his time for fury found,
He shoots with sudden vengeance from the
ground;

The prostrate vulgar passes o'er and spares,
But with a lordly rage his hunters tears.

Your case no tame expedients will afford:
Resolve on death, or conquest by the sword,
Which for no less a stake than life you
draw;

And self-defence is nature's eldest law.
Leave the warm people no considering time:
For then rebellion may be thought a
crime. 460

Avail yourself of what occasion gives,‡
But try your title while your father lives:
And that your arms may have a fair pre-
tence,

Proclaim you take them in the king's de-
fence;

Whose sacred life each minute would expose
To plots, from seeming friends, and secret
foes.

And who can sound the depth of David's soul!
Perhaps his fear his kindness may control.
He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
For plighted vows too late to be undone. 470
If so, by force he wishes to be gained:
Like women's lechery to seem constrained.

‡ *Avail yourself of what occasion gives.*] First
edition: *Prevail, &c.*

Doubt not : but, when he most affects the frown,
Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
Secure his person to secure your cause :
They who possess the prince possess the laws."

He said, and this advice above the rest,
With Absalom's mild nature suited best ;
Unblamed for life, ambition set aside,
Not stained with cruelty, nor puffed with pride. 480

How happy had he been, if destiny
Had higher placed his birth, or not so high !
His kingly virtues might have claimed a throne

And blessed all other countries but his own.
But charming greatness since so few refuse,
'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.

Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,
With blandishments to gain the public love :
To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
And popularly prosecute the plot. 490

To further this, Achitophel unites
The malcontents of all the Israelites :
Whose differing parties he could wisely join,
For several ends, to serve the same design.
The best, and of the princes some were such,
Who thought the power of monarchy too much ;

Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts ;
Not wicked, but seduced by impious arts.
By these the springs of property were bent,
And wound so high, they cracked the government. 500

The next for interest sought to embroil the state,

To sell their duty at a dearer rate ;
And make their Jewish markets of the throne ;

Pretending public good to serve their own.
Others thought kings an useless heavy load,
Who cost too much, and did too little good.
These were for laying honest David by,
On principles of pure good husbandry.
With them joined all the haranguers of the throng,

That thought to get preferment by the tongue. 510

Who follow next a double danger bring,
Not only hating David, but the king ;
The Solymæan rout * well versed of old,
In godly faction, and in treason bold ;
Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword,

But lofty to a lawful prince restored ;
Saw with disdain an Ethnic† plot begun,
And scorned by Jebusites to be outdone.
Hot Levites‡ headed these ; who pulled before

From the ark, which in the Judges' days
they bore, 520

Resumed their cant, and with a zealous cry,
Pursued their old beloved Theocracy :
Where Sanhedrim and priest enslaved the nation,

And justified their spoils by inspiration :
For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race,§
If once dominion they could found in grace !
These led the pack ; though not of surest scent,

Yet deepest mouthed against the government.

A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed,
Of the true old enthusiastic breed : 530

'Gainst form and order they their power employ,

Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.
But far more numerous was the herd of such,
Who think too little, and who talk too much.

These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,

Adored their fathers' God and property ;
And by the same blind benefit of fate,
The devil and the Jebusite did hate :
Born to be saved, even in their own despite,
Because they could not help believing right. 540

Such were the tools ; but a whole Hydra more

Remains of sprouting heads too long to score.

* *Solymæan rout*] The London Rebels.

† The Popish plot.

‡ *Levites*] The Presbyterians.

§ The preachers or ministers.

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land ;
 In the first rank of these did Zimri * stand ;
 A man so various, that he seemed to be
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome :
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong ;
 Was every thing by starts, and nothing long ;
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,
 Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and
 buffoon : 550

Then all for women, painting, rhyming,
 drinking,

Besides ten thousand freaks that d'ed in
 thinking.

Blest madman, who could every hour em-
 ploy,

With something new to wish, or to enjoy !
 Railing and praising were his usual themes ;
 And both, to show his judgment, in ex-
 tremes :

So over violent, or over civil,
 That every man with him was God or Devil.
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art :
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert. 560
 Beggared by fools, whom still he found too
 late ;

He had his jest, and they had his estate.
 He laughed himself from court ; then
 sought relief

By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief :
 For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
 On Absalom, and wise Achitophel :
 Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
 He left no faction, but of that was left.

Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse
 Of lords, below the dignity of verse. 570
 Wits, warriors, commonwealth's-men, were
 the best :

Kind husbands, and mere nobles, all the
 rest.

And therefore, in the name of dulness be
 The well-hung Balaam † and cold Caleb ‡
 free :

* George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, son
 of the Duke, killed by Felton. See his death, in
 Pope's Poems.

† Balaam is the Earl of Huntingdon.

‡ Caleb Lord Grey, a man of very bad
 character in private life.

And canting Nadab § let oblivion damn,
 Who made new porridge for the paschal
 lamb.

Let friendship's holy band some names
 assure ;

Some their own worth, and some let scorn
 secure.

Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place,
 Whom kings no titles gave, and God no
 grace : 580

Not bull-faced Jonas, || who could statutes
 draw

To mean rebellion, and make treason lay.
 But he, though bad, is followed by a worse,
 The wretch who Heaven's anointed dared
 to curse ;

Shimei ¶ whose youth did early promise
 bring

Of zeal to God and hatred to his king ;
 Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,
 And never broke the sabbath, but for gain :
 Nor ever was he known an oath to vent,
 Or curse, unless against the government. 590
 Thus heaping wealth, by the most ready
 way

Among the Jews, which was to cheat and
 pray :

The city, to reward his pious hate
 Against his master, chose him magistrate.
 His hand a vare ** of justice did uphold ;
 His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.
 During his office treason was no crime ;
 The sons of Belial had a glorious time :
 For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,
 Yet loved his wicked neighbour as him-
 self. 600

§ Nadab is Lord Howard of Escrick, who, when
 in the Tower, profanely took the Holy Sacrament
 in lamb's-wool, instead of wine. Lamb's-wool
 was ale poured on roasted apples. This impious
 man was the witness on whose base testimony
 Lord William Russell and Algernon Sidney were
 brought to the block.

|| Jonas was Sir William Jones, who drew the
 Habeas Corpus Act.—MS. Luttrell. MALONE.

¶ Shimei is Slingsby Bethel, one of the sheriffs
 of London, and a strong republican. He was
 said to be extremely stingy.

** A vare is a little white staff carried by a
 Spanish alguazil or sergeant as a badge of his
 office.

When two or three were gathered to declaim
Against the monarch of Jerusalem,
Shimei was always in the midst of them :
And if they cursed the king when he was by,
Would rather curse than break good company.

If any durst his factious friends accuse,
He packed a jury of dissenting Jews ;
Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
Would free the suffering saint from human laws.

For laws are only made to punish those 610
Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.
If any leisure time he had from power,
(Because 'tis sin to misemploy an hour,)
His business was, by writing to persuade,
That kings were useless, and a clog to trade :
And, that his noble style he might refine,
No Rechabite more shunned the fumes of wine.

Chaste were his cellars, and his shrivell'd board *

The grossness of a city feast abhorred :
His cooks with long disuse their trade forgot ; 620

Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot.

Such frugal virtue malice may accuse ;
But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews :
For towns, once burnt, such magistrates require

As dare not tempt God's providence by fire.
With spiritual food he fed his servants well,

But free from flesh that made the Jews rebel :

And Moses' laws he held in more account,
For forty days of fasting in the mount.

To speak the rest who better are forgot, 630
Would tire a well-breathed witness of the Plot.

Yet Corah,† thou shalt from oblivion pass ;
Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,

* He kept a very poor and scandalous shrivell'd board.—MS. Note by Mr. Luttrell.

MALONE.

† *Yet Corah,*] This was Titus Oates, the informer of the execrable Popish plot.

High as the serpent of thy metal made,
While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.

What, though his birth were base, yet comets rise

From earthy vapours, ere they shine in skies.

Prodigious actions may as well be done
By weaver's issue ‡ as by prince's son.

This arch-attester for the public good 640
By that one deed ennobles all his blood.

Who ever asked the witness's high race,
Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen grace?

Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,
His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen.
Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,

Sure signs he neither cholerick was, nor proud :

His long chin proved his wit ; his saint-like grace

A church-vermilion, and a Moses' face.
His memory, miraculously great, 650

Could plots, exceeding man's belief, repeat ;
Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,

For human wit could never such devise.
Some future truths are mingled in his book ;

But where the witness failed, the prophet spoke :

Some things like visionary flights appear ;
The spirit caught him up, the Lord knows where ;

And gave him his rabbinical degree,
Unknown to foreign university.

His judgment yet his memory did excel ; 660
Which pieced his wondrous evidence so well,

And suited to the temper of the times,
Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.

Let Israel's foes suspect his heavenly call,
And rashly judge his writ apocryphal ;

Our laws for such affronts have forfeits made :

He takes his life who takes away his trade.

‡ Titus Oates was the son of a weaver.—MS. Note by Mr. Luttrell. Oates was a clergyman.

Were I myself in witness Corah's place,
The wretch who did me such a dire disgrace

Should whet my memory, though once
forgot, 670

To make him an appendix of my plot.
His zeal to Heaven made him his prince
despise,

And load his person with indignities.
But zeal peculiar privilege affords,
Indulging latitude to deeds and words :
And Corah might for Agag's murder call,*
In terms as coarse as Samuel used to Saul.
What others in his evidence did join,
The best that could be had for love or coin,
In Corah's own predicament will fall : 680
For Witness is a common name to all.

Surrounded thus with friends of every
sort,

Deluded Absalom forsakes the court :
Impatient of high hopes, urged with re-
nown,

And fired with near possession of a crown.
The admiring crowd are dazzled with
surprise,

And on his goodly person feed their eyes.

His joy concealed,† he sets himself to show ;
On each side bowing popularly low :

His looks, his gestures, and his words he
frames, 690

And with familiar ease repeats their names.

* *And Corah might for Agag's murder call,*] Agag, Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, a justice of peace, before whom Oates had made his first deposition, and who was, soon after, found murdered in a ditch near Primrose Hill, on the road to Hampstead, his sword being run quite through his body, without any effusion of blood. This was done, as it was supposed, with a view to make people think he had murdered himself ; whereas, in fact, his death was occasioned by strangling, a broad livid mark being plain round his neck, which was broken, and his breast bruised in several places, as if he had been kneeled or trampled upon. His gloves and cane lay near him, his shoes were clean, and his money untouched. It is very surprising that his murderers were never discovered, though Bedloe, an infamous incendiary, swore the crime against two or three innocent people, who suffered death.

† *His joy concealed,*] First Edition: *Dissembling joy.*

Thus formed by nature, furnished out with
arts,

He glides unfelt into their secret hearts.
Then, with a kind compassionating look,
And sighs, bespeaking pity ere he spoke,
Few words he said ; but easy those and fit,
More slow than Hybla-drops, and far more
sweet.

"I mourn, my countrymen, your lost
estate ;

Though far unable to prevent your fate :
Behold a banished man for your dear
cause 700

Exposed a prey to arbitrary laws !

Yet oh ! that I alone could be undone,

Cut off from empire, and no more a son !

Now all your liberties a spoil are made ;

Egypt and Tyrus intercept your trade,*

And Jebusites your sacred rites invade.

My father, whom with reverence yet I
name,

Charmed into ease, is careless of his fame ;

And, bribed with petty sums of foreign
gold,

Is grown in Bathsheba's † embraces old ; 710

Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys ;

And all his power against himself employs.

He gives, and let him give, my right away :

But why should he his own and yours
betray ?

He, only he, can make the nation bleed,

And he alone from my revenge is freed.

Take then my tears," (with that he wiped
his eyes),

"'Tis all the aid my present power sup-
plies :

No court-informer can these arms accuse ;

These arms may sons against their fathers
use : 720

And 'tis my wish, the next successor's
reign

May make no other Israelite complain."

Youth, beauty, graceful action seldom
fail ;

But common interest always will prevail :

* *Egypt and Tyrus*] France and Holland.
† *Bathsheba*] Duchess of Portsmouth. Louise
de Querouaille.

And pity never ceases to be shown
To him who makes the people's wrongs his
own.

The crowd, that still believe their kings
oppress,
With lifted hands their young Messiah
bless :

Who now begins his progress to ordain
With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous
train : 780

From east to west his glories he dis-
plays,
And, like the sun, the promised land
surveys.

Fame runs before him as the morning-star,
And shouts of joy salute him from afar :
Each house receives him as a guardian god,
And consecrates the place of his abode.
But hospitable treats did most commend
Wise Issachar,* his wealthy western friend.
This moving court, that caught the people's
eyes,

And seemed but pomp, did other ends
disguise : 740

Achitophel had formed it, with intent
To sound the depth, and fathom where it
went

The people's hearts, distinguish friends from
foes,

And try their strength, before they came to
blows.

Yet all was coloured with a smooth pre-
tence

Of specious love and duty to their prince.
Religion, and redress of grievances,
Two names that always cheat, and always
please,

Are often urged ; and good king David's life
Endangered by a brother and a wife. 750

* *Issachar* was Thomas Thynne, Esq., ancestor of the Marquis of Bath, one of the most opulent commoners in the kingdom, and therefore usually called Tom of Ten Thousand. He had once been a favourite of the Duke of York, but he afterwards magnificently entertained the Duke of Monmouth and all his attendants, when he made a progress into the west, at his noble house at Longleat. He was afterwards murdered by order of Count Koningmark, whom he rivalled with a wealthy heiress.—J. WARTON.

Thus in a pageant show a plot is made ;
And peace itself is war in masquerade.
Oh, foolish Israel ! never warned by ill !
Still the same bait, and circumvented still !
Did ever men forsake their present ease,
In midst of health imagine a disease ;
Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,
Make heirs for monarchs, and for God
decree ?

What shall we think ? Can people give
away,

Both for themselves and sons, their native
sway ? 760

Then they are left defenceless to the
sword

Of each unbounded, arbitrary lord :
And laws are vain, by which we right
enjoy,

If kings unquestioned can those laws de-
stroy.

Yet if the crowd be judge of fit and just,
And kings are only officers in trust,
Then this resuming covenant was declared
When kings were made, or is for ever
barred.

If those who gave the sceptre could not tie
By their own deed their own posterity, 770

How then could Adam bind his future
race ?

How could his forfeit on mankind take
place ?

Or how could heavenly justice damn us
all,

Who ne'er consented to our father's fall ?
Then kings are slaves to those whom they
command,

And tenants to their people's pleasure
stand.

Add that the power for property allowed †
Is mischievously seated in the crowd :

For who can be secure of private right,
If sovereign sway may be dissolved by
might ? 780

Nor is the people's judgment always true :
The most may err as grossly as the few,

† In the first edition—

" *That power which is for property allowed.*"

And faultless kings run down by common
cry,

For vice, oppression, and for tyranny.
What standard is there in a fickle rout,
Which, flowing to the mark, runs faster
out?

Nor only crowds but Sanhedrims may be
Infected with this public lunacy,
And share the madness of rebellious times,
To murder monarchs for imagined
crimes. 790

If they may give and take whene'er they
please,

Not kings alone, the Godhead's images,
But government itself at length must fall
To nature's state, where all have right to
all.

Yet grant our lords the people, kings can
make,

What prudent men a settled throne would
shake?

For whatsoe'er their sufferings were before,
That change they covet makes them suffer
more.

All other errors but disturb a state;
But innovation is the blow of fate. 800

If ancient fabrics nod, and threat to fall,
To patch the flaws, and buttress up the
wall,

Thus far 'tis duty: but here fix the mark:
For all beyond it is to touch the ark.*

To change foundations, cast the frame
anew,

Is work for rebels, who base ends pursue;
At once divine and human laws control,
And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.

The tampering world is subject to this
curse,

To physic their disease into a worse. 810
Now what relief can righteous David
bring?

How fatal 'tis to be too good a king!

Friends he has few, so high the madness
grows;

Who dare be such must be the people's
foes.

Yet some there were, e'en in the worst of
days;

Some let me name, and naming is to
praise.

In this short file Barzillai† first appears;
Barzillai, crowned with honour and with
years.

Long since, the rising rebels he withstood‡
In regions waste beyond the Jordan's
flood: 820

Unfortunately brave to buoy the state;
But sinking underneath his master's fate:
In exile with his godlike prince he mourned;
For him he suffered, and with him returned.
The court he practised, not the courtier's art:
Large was his wealth, but larger was his
heart;

Which well the noblest objects knew to
choose,

The fighting warrior, and recording muse.
His bed could once a fruitful issue boast;
Now more than half a father's name is
lost. 830

His eldest hope, § with every grace adorned,
By me, so Heaven will have it, always
mourned,

And always honoured, snatched in man-
hood's prime

By unequal fates, and Providence's crime;
Yet not before the goal of honour won,
All parts fulfilled of subject and of son:
Swift was the race, but short the time to
run.

Oh, narrow circle, but of power divine,
Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line!

By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was
known, 840

Arms thy delight, and war was all thy
own:

† *Barzillai*,] The Duke of Ormond, one of the
noblest of men.

‡ The Duke of Ormond defended the King's
cause in "the waste places" of Ireland, against
Cromwell. He went into exile with Charles II.,
but at the Restoration was made Lord-Lieu-
tenant of Ireland again.

§ *His eldest hope* was the gifted and noble
Earl of Ossory, of whom his father so pathetically
said after his death, "I had rather have my dead
Ossory than any a living son of ye all."

* The first edition reads, *our* ark.

Thy force infused the fainting Tyrians *
propped ;

And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune
stopped.

Oh, ancient honour ! Oh, unconquered
hand,

Whom foes unpunished never could with-
stand !

But Israel was unworthy of thy name ; †
Short is the date of all immoderate fame.

It looks as Heaven our ruin had designed,
And durst not trust thy fortune and thy
mind.

Now, free from earth, thy disencumbered
soul 850

Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds
and starry pole :

From thence thy kindred legions mayst thou
bring,

To aid the guardian angel of thy king.

Here stop, my muse, here cease thy pain-
ful flight :

No pinions can pursue immortal height :

Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,
And tell thy soul she should have fled before :

Or fled she with his life, and left this verse ‡
To hang on her departed patron's hearse ?

Now take thy steepy flight from heaven, and
see 860

If thou canst find on earth another he :

Another he would be too hard to find ;

See then whom thou canst see not far behind.

* The *Tyrians* are the Dutch. Lord Ossory married a Dutch lady, lived some time in Holland, and fought with the English force under the Prince of Orange against the French in 1678.

† But Israel was unworthy of thy name ;
Short is the date of all immoderate fame.]

In the first edition Dryden had—

"But Israel was unworthy of thy birth,
Short is the date of all immoderate worth."

Israel, of course, is England.

‡ To hang on her departed patron's hearse ?]

It was the custom to affix elegies to the pall or hearse at funerals. See Milton's *Lat. Eleg.* II. 22, and the epitaph on Lady Winchester :—

"Here be tears of perfect moan,
Wept for thee in *Heaven* ;
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy hearse, to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name."

Zadoc the priest, § whom, shunning power
and place,

His lowly mind advanced to David's grace.

With him the Sagan of Jerusalem, ||

Of hospitable soul, and noble stem ;

Him of the western dome ¶ whose weighty
sense

Flows in fit words and heavenly eloquence.

The prophets' sons, by such example led, 870

To learning and to loyalty were bred :

For colleges on bounteous kings depend,

And never rebel was to arts a friend.

To these succeed the pillars of the laws ;

Who best could plead, and best can judge a
cause.

Next them a train of loyal peers ascend ;

Sharp-judging Adriel, ** the Muses' friend

Himself a Muse : in Sanhedrim's debate

True to his prince, but not a slave of state :

Whom David's love with honours did
adorn, 880

That from his disobedient son were torn.

Jotham of piercing wit, †† and pregnant
thought :

Endued by nature, and by learning taught

To move assemblies, who but only tried

The worse awhile, then chose the better
side :

Nor chose alone, but turned the balance too ;
So much the weight of one brave man
can do.

§ *Zadoc the priest,*] Zadoc is Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury. He was one of the seven Bishops sent to the Tower by James II.

|| — *the Sagan of Jerusalem,*] Compton, Bishop of London. This was the Bishop who carried off the Princess Anne to Nottingham to join the party of the Prince of Orange.

¶ *Him of the western dome*] Dolben, Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster. During the Rebellion he fought in the Royal Army, and was made a major by Charles I.

** *Sharp-judging Adriel,*] Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave. The especial friend and patron of Dryden. He was always loyal to James II., for which William III. once commended him, and after some years took him into favour, and gave him a pension of £3000 a year.

†† *Jotham of piercing wit,*] First edition : Jotham of ready wit. Jotham was the Marquis of Halifax, who, in Hume's opinion, possessed the finest genius and most extensive capacity of all employed in public affairs by Charles II.

Hushai,* the friend of David in distress ;
 In public storms, of manly steadfastness :
 By foreign treaties† he informed his
 youth, 890
 And joined experience to his native truth.
 His frugal care supplied the wanting throne ;
 Frugal for that, but bounteous of his
 own :
 'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow ;
 But hard the task to manage well the low ;
 For sovereign power is too depressed or
 high,
 When kings are forced to sell, or crowds to
 buy.
 Indulge one labour more, my weary muse,
 For Amiel ; ‡ who can Amiel's praise re-
 fuse ?
 Of ancient race by birth, but nobler yet 900
 In his own worth, and without title great :
 The Sanhedrim long time as chief he ruled,
 Their reason guided, and their passion
 cooled :
 So dexterous was he in the crown's defence,
 So formed to speak a loyal nation's sense,
 That, as their band was Israel's tribes in
 small,
 So fit was he to represent them all.
 Now rasher charioteers the seat ascend,
 Whose loose careers his steady skill com-
 mend :

* *Hushai, the friend of David in distress ;*
 Laurence Hyde, second son to Edward the great
 Earl of Clarendon. He was created Earl of
 Rochester, and made Treasurer in 1682 ; a
 sincerely loyal and also clever man.

† In 1676 he went on an embassy to Poland,
 was one of the plenipotentiaries at the treaty of
 Nimwegen, and afterwards ambassador in Hol-
 land, where he acquitted himself with honour.
 He was strongly against the bill of exclusion.—
 DERRICK. Lord Rochester was a patron and
 friend of Dryden.

‡ Sir Edward Seymour, a man of high birth,
 being the elder branch of that family. Burnet
 says, he was the first Speaker of the House of
 Commons that was not bred to the law. He
 knew the House and every man in it so well, that
 by looking about he could tell the fate of any
 question. Charles II. loved him personally,
 though he frequently voted against his measures.
 But once having voted for the court, the King said
 to him, "You were not against me to-day." He
 immediately answered, "No, sir, I was against
 my conscience to-day."—Dr. J. WARTON.

They, like the unequal ruler of the
 day, § 910
 Misguide the seasons, and mistake the
 way :
 While he withdrawn at their mad labours
 smiles,
 And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.
 These were the chief, a small but faithful
 band
 Of worthies, in the breach who dared to
 stand,
 And tempt the united fury of the land ;
 With grief they viewed such powerful engines
 bent,
 To batter down the lawful government.
 A numerous faction, with pretended frights,
 In Sanhedrims to plume the regal rights ; 920
 The true successor from the court removed ;
 The plot, by hiring witnesses improved ;
 These ills they saw, and, as their duty
 bound,
 They showed the king the danger of the
 wound ;
 That no concessions from the throne would
 please,
 But lenitives fomented the disease :
 That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,
 Was made the lure to draw the people
 down :
 That false Achitophel's pernicious hate
 Had turned the plot to ruin church and
 state : 930
 The council violent, the rabble worse :
 That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.
 With all these loads of injuries oppressed,
 And long revolving in his careful breast
 The event of things, at last his patience
 tired,
 Thus, from his royal throne, by Heaven
 inspired,
 The god-like David spoke ; with awful fear
 His train their Maker in their master hear.
 "Thus long have I, by native mercy swayed,
 My wrongs dissembled, my revenge de-
 layed : 940

§ Phaeton, who drove fatally the chariot of the
 sun.

So willing to forgive the offending age ;
 So much the father did the king assuage.
 But now so far my clemency they slight,
 The offenders question my forgiving right :
 That one was made for many, they contend ;
 But 'tis to rule ; for that's a monarch's end.
 They call my tenderness of blood, my fear :
 Though manly tempers can the longest bear.
 Yet, since they will divert my native course,
 'Tis time to show I am not good by
 force. 950

Those heaped affronts that haughty subjects
 bring,

Are burdens for a camel, not a king.
 Kings are the public pillars of the state,
 Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight :
 If my young Samson will pretend a call
 To shake the column, let him share the fall :
 But oh, that yet he would repent and live ! *
 How easy 'tis for parents to forgive !
 With how few tears a pardon might be won
 From nature, pleading for a darling son ! 960
 Poor, pitied youth, by my paternal care,
 Raised up to all the height his frame could
 bear !

Had God ordained his fate for empire born,
 He would have given his soul another turn :
 Gulled with a patriot's name, whose modern
 sense

Is one that would by law destroy his prince ;
 The people's brave, the politician's tool ;
 Never was patriot yet but was a fool.
 Whence comes it, that religion and the laws
 Should more be Absalom's than David's
 cause ? 970

His old instructor, ere he lost his place,
 Was never thought indued with so much
 grace.

Good heavens, how faction can a patriot
 paint !

My rebel ever proves my people's saint.
 Would they impose an heir upon the throne !
 Let Sanhedrims be taught to give their own.
 A king's at least a part of government ;
 And mine as requisite as their consent :

Without my leave a future king to choose,
 Infers a right the present to depose. 980
 True, they petition me to approve their
 choice :

But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.
 My pious subjects for my safety pray ;
 Which to secure, they take my power away.
 From plots and treasons Heaven preserve
 my years,

But save me most from my petitioners !
 Unsatiated as the barren womb or grave ;
 God cannot grant so much as they can crave.
 What then is left, but with a jealous eye
 To guard the small remains of loyalty ! 990
 The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,
 And the same law teach rebels to obey :
 Votes shall no more established power con-
 trol,

Such votes as make a part exceed the whole.
 No groundless clamours shall my friends
 remove,
 Nor crowds have power to punish ere they
 prove ;

For gods and god-like kings their care
 express,
 Still to defend their servants in distress.
 Oh, that my power to saving were confined !
 Why am I forced, like Heaven, against my
 mind, 1000

To make examples of another kind !
 Must I at length the sword of justice draw ?
 Oh, cursed effects of necessary law !
 How ill my fear they by my mercy scan !
 Beware the fury of a patient man.

Law they require, let Law then show her
 face ;

They could not be content to look on Grace,
 Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
 To tempt the terror of her front and die.

By their own arts 'tis righteously de-
 creed, 1010

Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.
 Against themselves their witnesses will
 swear,†

Till viper-like their mother plot they tear ;

* These four verses were added in the second edition.

† Alluding to the inconsistencies and contradictions of Oates, Bedloe, and other witnesses of the Popish plot.

And suck for nutriment that bloody gore,
Which was their principle of life before.
There Belial with their Beelzebub will fight ;
Thus on my foes, my foes shall do me right.
Nor doubt the event : for factious crowds
engage,

In their first onset, all their brutal rage.
Then let them take an unresisted course : 1020
Retire, and traverse, and delude their force :
But, when they stand all breathless, urge
the fight,
And rise upon them with redoubled might :

For lawful power is still superior found ;
When long driven back at length it stands
the ground,"

He said : The Almighty nodding gave
consent ;

And peals of thunder shook the firmament.

Henceforth a series of new time began,
The mighty years in long procession ran :
Once more the god-like David was re-
stored, 1030

And willing nations knew their lawful
lord.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

PART II.

“Si quis tamen hæc quoque, si quis
Captus amore leget.”—VIRG. *Ecl.* vi. 10.

NOTE.

It is thought advisable to keep the two parts of this Satire together, though the publication of Dryden's satire "Mac Flecknoe" intervened between it and the first part.

It was not written by Dryden, though no doubt he revised it; but he added to it two hundred lines of his own. The beginning and end of these verses are marked in this version.

The great popularity of the first part had caused its readers to urge Dryden to write a second part; but he seems either not to have had time, or to have wanted inclination to attempt it, and he deputed the work to his warm friend Nahum Tate, whose name is best known to us as a coadjutor of Brady in the metrical translation of the Psalms that is bound up in our Book of Common Prayer. Nahum Tate was an Irishman, and a Tory. He became Poet Laureate after Shadwell, who was Dryden's successor, after the Revolution. The Key was not published till 1716, when it was added in the "Miscellany Poems."

Scott thought that Dryden wrote great part of the descriptions of Corah and Aiod.

The second part is inferior to Dryden's, and did not attain the popularity of the first part, as sequels seldom do.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

PART II.

SINCE men like beasts each other's prey were made, Since trade began, and priesthood grew a trade, Since realms were formed, none sure so cursed as those That madly their own happiness oppose ; There Heaven itself and god-like kings in vain Shower down the manna of a gentle reign ; While pampered crowds to mad sedition run, And monarchs by indulgence are undone. Thus David's clemency was fatal grown,* While wealthy faction awed the wanting † throne.	His swiftest hopes with swifter homage meet, And crowd their servile necks beneath his feet. Thus to his aid while pressing tides repair, He mounts and spreads his streamers in the air. The charms of empire might his youth mis- lead, But what can our besotted Israel plead ? Swayed by a monarch, whose serene com- mand Seems half the blessing of our promised land ;
For now their sovereign's orders to contemn Was held the charter of Jerusalem ; His rights to invade, his tributes to refuse, A privilege peculiar to the Jews ; As if from heavenly call this licence fell, And Jacob's seed were chosen to rebel ! Achitophel with triumph sees his crimes Thus suited to the madness of the times ; And Absalom, to make his hopes succeed, Of flattering ‡ charms no longer stands in need ;	Whose only grievance is excess of ease ; Freedom our pain, and plenty our disease ! Yet, since all folly would lay claim to sense, And wickedness ne'er wanted a pretence, With arguments they'd make their treason good, And righteous David's self with slanders load : That arts of foreign sway he did affect, And guilty Jebusites from law protect, Whose very chiefs, convict, were never freed ; Nay, we have seen their sacrificers bleed !
While fond of change, though ne'er so dearly bought, Our tribes outstrip the youth's ambitious thought ;	Accusers' infamy is urged in vain, While in the bounds of sense they did con- tain ; But soon they launched into the unfathomed tide, And in the depths they knew disdained to ride. For probable discoveries to dispense, Was thought below a pensioned evidence,

† First edition: *Flatteries*.

Mere truth was dull, nor suited with the port
Of pampered Corah * when advanced to
court.

No less than wonders now they will impose,
And projects void of grace or sense dis-
close.

Such was the charge on pious Michal
brought,

Michal † that ne'er was cruel even in thought,
The best of queens, and most obedient wife,
Impeached of cursed designs on David's life!
His life, the theme of her eternal prayer,
'Tis scarce so much his guardian angel's
care.

Not summer morns such mildness can dis-
close,

The Hermon lily, nor the Sharon rose.
Neglecting each vain pomp of majesty,
Transported Michal feeds her thoughts on
high.

She lives with angels, and, as angels do,
Quits heaven sometimes to bless the world
below;

Where, cherished by her bounties' plente-
ous spring,

Reviving widows smile, and orphans sing.
Oh! when rebellious Israel's crimes at
height

Are threatened with her lord's approaching
fate,

The piety of Michal then remain
In Heaven's remembrance, and prolong his
reign!

Less desolation did the pest pursue
That from Dan's limits to Beersheba slew, 70

Less fatal the repeated wars of Tyre,
And less Jerusalem's avenging fire.

With gentler terror these our state o'erran,
Than since our evidencing days began!

On every cheek a pale confusion sat,
Continued fear beyond the worst of fate!

Trust was no more; art, science, useless
made;

All occupations lost but Corah's trade.

Meanwhile a guard on modest Corah wait,
If not for safety, needful yet for state. 80
Well might he deem each peer and prince
his slave,

And lord it o'er the tribes which he could
save:

Even vice in him was virtue—what sad fate
But for his honesty had seized our state?

And with what tyranny had we been cursed,
Had Corah never proved a villain first?

To have told his knowledge of the intrigue
in gross,

Had been, alas! to our deponent's loss:
The travelled Levite had the experience got

To husband well, and make the best of s'
plot;

And therefore, like an evidence of skill,
With wise reserves secured his pension still;

Nor quite of future power himself bereft,
But limbos large for unbelievers left.

And now his writ such reverence had got,
'Twas worse than plotting to suspect his
plot.

Some were so well convinced, they made no
doubt

Themselves to help the foundered swearers
out.

Some had their sense imposed on by their
fear,

But more for interest sake believe and
swear: 100

Even to that height with some the frenzy
grew,

They raged to find their danger not prove
true.

Yet, than all these a viler crew remain,
Who with Achitophel the cry maintain;

Not urged by fear, nor through misguided
sense,

Blind zeal and starving need had some pre-
tence,

But for the good old cause, that did excite
The original rebels' wiles, revenge and spite.

These raise the plot, to have the scandal
thrown

Upon the bright successor of the crown, ‡ 110

* Corah] Titus Oates.

† Michal] Katherine of Portugal; a Roman
Catholic. She was an amiable and worthy,
though not pleasing woman.

‡ James, Duke of York.

Whose virtue with such wrongs they had
pursued,

As seemed all hope of pardon to exclude.
Thus, while on private ends their zeal is
built,

The cheated crowd applaud and share their
guilt.

Such practices as these, too gross to lie
Long unobserved by each discerning eye,
The more judicious Israelites unspelled,
Though still the charm the giddy rabble
held.

Even Absalom, amidst the dazzling beams
Of empire, and ambition's flattering
dreams, ¹²⁰

Perceives the plot, too foul to be excused,
To aid designs, no less pernicious, used.
And, filial sense yet striving in his breast,
Thus to Achitophel his doubts expressed :—

"Why are my thoughts upon a crown
employed,

Which once obtained can be but half
enjoyed ?

Not so when virtue did my arms require,
And to my father's wars I flew entire.
My regal power how will my foes resent,
When I myself have scarce my own cor-
sent ? ¹³⁰

Give me a son's unblemished truth again,
Or quench the sparks of duty that remain.
How slight to force a throne that legions
guard

The task to me ; to prove unjust, how hard !
And if the imagined guilt thus wound my
thought,

What will it when the tragic scene is
wrought ?

Dire war must first be conjured from below,
The realm we'd rule we first must over-
throw ;

And, when the civil furies are on wing
That blind and undistinguished slaughters
fling, ¹⁴⁰

Who knows what impious chance may reach
the king ?

Oh ! rather let me perish in the strife,
Than have my crown the price of David's
life !

Or if the tempest of the war he stand,
In peace, some vile officious villain's hand
His soul's anointed temple may invade,
Or, pressed by clamorous crowds, myself be
made

His murderer ; rebellious crowds, whose
guilt
Shall dread his vengeance till his blood be
spilt ;

Which if my filial tenderness oppose, ¹⁵⁰
Since to the empire by their arms I rose,
Those very arms on me shall be employed,
A new usurper crowned, and I destroyed :
The same pretence of public good will hold,
And new Achitophels be found as bold
To urge the needful change, perhaps the
old."

He said. The statesman with a smile
replies,

A smile that did his rising spleen disguise :—
"My thoughts presumed our labours at an
end,

And are we still with conscience to con-
tend ? ¹⁶⁰

Whose want in kings as needful is allowed,
As 'tis for them to find it in the crowd.

Far in the doubtful passage you are gone,
And only can be safe by pressing on.

The crown's true heir, a prince severe and
wise,

Has viewed your motions long with jealous
eyes :

Your person's charms, your more prevail-
ing arts,

And marked your progress in the people's
hearts,

Whose patience is the effect of stunted
power,

But treasures vengeance for the fatal hour : ¹⁷⁰
And if remote the peril he can bring,

Your present danger's greater from the king.
Let not a parent's name deceive your sense,

Nor trust the father in a jealous prince !
Your trivial faults if he could so resent,

To doom you little less than banishment,
What rage must your presumption since
inspire ?

Against his orders you return from Tyre ;

Nor only so, but with a pomp more high,
And open court of popularity, 180
The factious tribes."—"And this reproof
from thee?"

The prince replies; "O statesman's wind-
ing skill,

They first condemn that first advised the
ill!"

"Illustrious youth," returned Achitophel,
"Misconstrue not the words that mean you
well.

The course you steer I worthy blame con-
clude,

But 'tis because you leave it unpursued.

A monarch's crown with fate surrounded
lies;

Who reach, lay hold on death that miss the
prize.

Did you for this expose yourself to show, 190
And to the crowd bow popularly low?

For this your glorious progress next ordain,
With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous
train;

With fame before you like the morning
star,

And shouts of joy saluting from afar?

Oh, from the heights you've reached but
take a view,

Scarce leading Lucifer could fall like you!

And must I here my shipwrecked arts be-
moan?

Have I for this so oft made Israel groan?

Your single interest with the nation
weighed, 200

And turned the scale where your desires
were laid?

Even when at helm a course so dangerous
moved

To land your hopes, as my removal proved."

"I not dispute," the royal youth replies,

"The known perfection of your policies;

Nor in Achitophel yet grudge or blame

The privilege that statesmen ever claim;

Who private interest never yet pursued,

But still pretended 'twas for others' good.

What politician yet e'er 'scaped his fate, 210

Who saving his own neck not saved the
state?

From hence, on every humorous wind that
veered,

With shifted sails a several course you
steered.

What form of sway did David e'er pursue,
That seemed like absolute, but sprung from
you?

Who at your instance quashed each penal
law,

That kept dissenting factious Jews in awe;

And who suspends fixed laws, may abrogate;

That done, form new, and so enslave the
state.

Even property, whose champion now you
stand, 220

And seem for this the idol of the land,

Did ne'er sustain such violence before,

As when your counsel shut the royal store; *

Advice, that ruin to whole tribes procured,

But secret kept till your own banks secured.

Recount with this the triple covenant broke,

And Israel fitted for a foreign yoke;

Nor here your counsels' fatal progress
stayed,

But sent your levied powers to Pharaoh's
aid.

Hence Tyre and Israel, low in ruins laid, 230

And Egypt, once their scorn, their common
terror made.

Even yet of such a season can we dream,
When royal rights you made your darling
theme;

For power unlimited could reasons draw,

And place prerogative above the law;

Which, on your fall from office, grew unjust,

The laws made king, the king a slave in
trust:

Whom with state-craft, to interest only true,

You now accuse of ills contrived by you."

To this Hell's agent—"Royal youth, fix
here; 240

Let interest be the star by which I steer.

Hence to repose your trust in me was wise,

Whose interest most in your advancement
lies,

* The closing of the Exchequer in 1672. Shaftesbury was one of the Cabal Government, under his earlier title of Lord Ashley.

A tie so firm as always will avail,
When friendship, nature, and religion fail;
On ours the safety of the crowd depends,
Secure the crowd, and we obtain our ends,
Whom I will cause so far our guilt to
share,
Till they are made our champions by their
fear.

What opposition can your rival bring, 250
While Sanhedrims are jealous of the king?
His strength as yet in David's friendship
lies,

And what can David's self without supplies?
Who with exclusive bills must now dispense,
Debar the heir, or starve in his defence;
Returns reproaches, and cries up the cause.
And David's justice never can admit.

Or forced by wants his brother to betray,
To your ambition next he clears the way;
For if succession once to nought they
bring, 260

Their next advance removes the present
king;

Persisting else his senates to dissolve,
In equal hazard shall his reign involve.
Our tribes, whom Pharaoh's power so much
alarms,

Shall rise without their prince to oppose his
arms;

Nor boots it on what cause at first they
join,

Their troops, once up, are tools for our
design.

At least such subtle covenants shall be made,
Till peace itself is war in masquerade.

Associations of mysterious sense, 270
Against, but seeming for, the king's defence:

Even on their courts of justice fetters draw,
And from our agents muzzle up their law.

By which a conquest, if we fail to make,
'Tis a drawn game at worst, and we secure
our stake."

He said, and for the dire success depends
On various sects, by common guilt made
friends,

Whose heads, though ne'er so differing in
their creed,

I' the point of treason yet were well agreed.

'Mongst these, extorting Ishban * first ap-
pears, 280

Pursued by a meagre troop of bankrupt
heirs.

Blest times, when Ishban, he whose occu-
pation

So long has been to cheat, reforms the
nation!

Ishban of conscience suited to his trade,
As good a saint as usurer ever made.

Yet Mammon has not so engrossed him
quite,

But Belial lays as large a claim of spite;
Who, for those pardons from his prince he
draws,

Returns reproaches, and cries up the cause.
That year in which the city he did sway, 290

He left rebellion in a hopeful way.

Yet his ambition once was found so bold,
To offer talents of extorted gold,

Could David's wants have so been bribed,
to shame

And scandalise our peerage with his name;
For which, his dear sedition he'd forswear,

And e'en turn loyal to be made a peer.
Next him, let railing Rabsheka † have place,

So full of zeal he has no need of grace;
A saint that can both flesh and spirit

use, 300

Alike haunt conventicles ‡ and the stews:
Of whom the question difficult appears,

If most i' the preachers' or the bawds'
arrears.

What caution could appear too much in him
That keeps the treasure of Jerusalem!

Let David's brother but approach the
town,

"Double our guards," he cries, "we are
undone."

Protesting that he dares not sleep in's bed,
Lest he should rise next morn without his
head.

* Sir Robert Clayton, an alderman of London,
strongly opposed to the Court.

† Sir Thomas Player, a member of Parliament
for the city; an enemy of the Duke of York.

‡ Pronounced with the accent on the third
syllable.

(Dryden's own lines begin here.)

Next these, a troop of busy spirits
 press, 310
 Of little fortunes, and of conscience less ;
 With them the tribe, whose luxury had
 drained
 Their banks, in former sequestrations gained ;
 Who rich and great by past rebellions grew,
 And long to fish the troubled streams anew.*
 Some future hopes, some present payment
 draws,
 To sell their conscience and espouse the
 cause.
 Such stipends those vile hirelings best befit,
 Priests without grace, and poets without wit.
 Shall that false Hebronite† escape our
 curse, 320
 Judas, that keeps the rebels' pension-purse ;
 Judas, that pays the treason-writer's fee,
 Judas, that well deserves his namesake's tree ;
 Who at Jerusalem's own gates erects
 His college for a nursery of sects ; ‡
 Young prophets with an early care secures,
 And with the dung of his own arts manures ?
 What have the men of Hebron here to do ?
 What part in Israel's promised land have
 you ?
 Here Phaleg,§ the lay Hebronite, is
 come, 330
 'Cause, like the rest, he could not live at
 home ;
 Who from his own possessions could not
 drain
 An omer even of Hebronitish grain ;

* In the first edition troubled streams was waves.

† Robert Ferguson, an Independent preacher. He was one of the chief conspirators in the Rye-house Plot. He devised the murder of the King and Duke of York, and when some of the assassins actually demurred at committing the crime on Sunday, he said that "the sanctity of the deed fitted the sanctity of the day." He escaped punishment for treason twice, and after the Revolution turned Jacobite.

‡ Who at Jerusalem's own gates erects

His college for a nursery of sects ;]

Ferguson had a chapel near Moorfields.

—DERRICK.

§ A Hebronite means a Scotchman. Phaleg represents James Forbes, tutor to Lord Derby.

Here struts it like a patriot, and talks high
 Of injured subjects, altered property :
 An emblem of that buzzing insect just,
 That mounts the wheel, and thinks she
 raises dust.

Can dry bones live ? or skeletons produce
 The vital warmth of cuckoldising juice ?
 Slim Phaleg could, and, at the table fed, 340
 Returned the grateful product to the bed.
 A waiting-man to travelling nobles chose,
 He his own laws would saucily impose,
 Till bastinadoed back again he went,
 To learn those manners he to teach was
 sent.

Chastised he ought to have retreated home,
 But he reads politics to Absalom.
 For never Hebronite, though kicked and
 scorned,

To his own country willingly returned.
 —But leaving famished Phaleg to be fed, 350
 And to talk treason for his daily bread,
 Let Hebron, nay, let Hell, produce a man
 So made for mischief as Ben-Jochanan, ||
 A Jew of humble parentage was he,
 By trade a Levite, though of low degree :
 His pride no higher than the desk aspired,
 But for the drudgery of priests was hired
 To read and pray in linen ephod brave,
 And pick up single shekels from the grave.
 Married at last, and finding charge come
 faster, 360

He could not live by God, but changed his
 master :
 Inspired by want, was made a factious tool ;
 They got a villain, and we lost a fool.
 Still violent, whatever cause he took,
 But most against the party he forsook.
 For renegadoes, who ne'er turn by halves,
 Are bound in conscience to be double
 knaves.

So this prose prophet took most monstrous
 pains
 To let his master see he earned his gains.

|| The Rev. Samuel Johnson. A Levite means a clergyman of the English Church. Dr. Warton says that he was a man of great learning and good morals, but he was certainly an enemy to the Duke of York.

But as the devil owes all his imps a
shame, 370

He chose the Apostate for his proper theme ;
With little pains he made the picture true,
And from reflection took the rogue he drew.
A wondrous work, to prove the Jewish
nation

In every age a murmuring generation ;
To trace 'em from their infancy of sinning,
And show 'em factious from their first be-
ginning ;

To prove they could rebel, and rail, and
mock,

Much to the credit of the chosen flock ;
A strong authority, which must convince 380
That saints own no allegiance to their prince.
As 'tis a leading-card to make a w——

To prove her mother had turned up before.
But, tell me, did the drunken patriarch bless
The son that showed his father's nakedness ?
Such thanks the present church thy pen will
give,

Which proves rebellion was so primitive.
Must ancient failings be examples made ?
Then murderers from Cain may learn their
trade.

As thou the heathen and the saint hast
drawn, 390

Methinks the Apostate was the better man :
And thy hot father, waiving my respect,
Not of a mother-church, but of a sect.
And such he needs must be of thy inditing ;
This comes of drinking asses' milk and
writing.

If Balak * should be called to leave his place,
As profit is the loudest call of grace,
His temple, dispossessed of one, would be
Replenished with seven devils more by
thee.

Levi, thou art a load ; I'll lay thee
down, 400

And show rebellion bare, without a gown ;
Poor slaves in metre, dull and addle-pated,
Who rhyme below even David's Psalms
translated :

* *Balak*] Dr. Burnet, afterwards Bishop of
Salisbury.

Some in my speedy pace I must outrun,
As lame Mephibosheth,† the wizard's son ;
To make quick way, I'll leap o'er heavy
blocks,

Shun rotten Uzza,‡ as I would the pox ;
And hasten Og and Doeg§ to rehearse,
Two fools that crutch their feeble sense on
verse ;

Who, by my muse, to all succeeding
times 410

Shall live, in spite of their own doggrel
rhymes.

Doeg, though without knowing how or
why,

Made still a blundering kind of melody ;
Spurred boldly on, and dashed through thick
and thin,

Through sense and nonsense, never out nor
in ;

Free from all meaning, whether good or bad,
And, in one word, heroically mad :

He was too warm on picking-work to dwell,
But fagotted his notions as they fell,
And if they rhymed and rattled, all was
well. 420

Spiteful he is not, though he wrote a satire,
For still there goes some thinking to ill-
nature :

He needs no more than birds and beasts to
think,

All his occasions are to eat and drink.
If he call rogue and rascal from a garret,
He means you no more mischief than a
parrot :

The words for friend and foe alike were
made,

To fetter 'em in verse is all his trade.
For almonds he'll cry whore to his own
mother :

And call young Absalom King David's
brother. 430

† *Portage*, a lawyer, who wrote plays and
poems. His father, a clergyman, had lost his
living on a charge of practising magical arts.

‡ *Uzza*.] Supposed to be a verse-writer named
Jack Hall.

§ *Shadwell* and *Settle*. The latter wrote plays,
and his success made Dryden bitterly jealous.
He died a brother of the Charter House.

Let him be gallows-free by my consent,
And nothing suffer since he nothing meant ;
Hanging supposes human soul and reason ;
This animal's below committing treason.
Shall he be hanged who never could rebel ?
That's a preferment for Achitophel.
The woman that committed buggary
Was rightly sentenced by the law to die ;
But 'twas hard fate that to the gallows led
The dog that never heard the statute
read. 440

Railing in other men may be a crime,
But ought to pass for mere instinct in him :
Instinct he follows, and no farther knows,
For to write verse with him is to transprose.
'Twere pity treason at his door to lay,
Who makes *heaven's gate a lock to its own
key* :

Let him rail on, let his invective muse
Have four-and-twenty letters to abuse,
Which, if he jumbles to one line of sense
Indict him of a capital offence. 450
In fireworks give him leave to vent his spite,
Those are the only serpents he can write ;
The height of his ambition, is, we know,
But to be master of a puppet-show.
On that one stage his works may yet appear,
And a month's harvest keeps him all the
year.

Now stop your noses, readers, all and
some,

For here's a tun of midnight work to come,
Og, from a treason-tavern rolling home ;
Round as a globe, and liquored every
chink, 460
Goodly and great, he sails behind his link.
With all this bulk there's nothing lost in Og,
For every inch that is not fool, is rogue :
A monstrous mass of foul corrupted matter,
As all the devils had spewed to make the
batter.

When wine has given him courage to blas-
pheme,
He curses God, but God before cursed him ;
And if man could have reason, none has
more,
That made his paunch so rich, and him so
poor.

With wealth he was not trusted, for Heaven
knew 470

What 'twas of old to pamper up a Jew ;
To what would he on quail and pheasant
swell,

That even on tripe and carrion could rebel ?
But though Heaven made him poor (with
reverence speaking),

He never was a poet of God's making ;
The midwife laid her hand on his thick skull
With this prophetic blessing—*Be thou dull!*

Drink, swear, and roar, forbear no lewd de-
light,

Fit for thy bulk ; do anything but write :
Thou art of lasting make, like thoughtless
men, 480

A strong nativity—but for the pen ;
Eat opium, mingle arsenic in thy drink,
Still thou may'st live, avoiding pen and ink.
I see, I see, 'tis counsel given in vain,
For treason blotched in rhyme will be thy
bane ;

Rhyme is the rock on which thou art to
wreck ;

'Tis fatal to thy fame and to thy neck :
Why should thy metre good king David
blast ?

A psalm of his will surely be thy last.
Darest thou presume in verse to meet thy
foes, 490

Thou whom the penny pamphlet foiled in
prose ?

Doeg, whom God for mankind's mirth has
made,

O'ertops thy talent in thy very trade ;
Doeg to thee, thy paintings are so coarse,
A poet is, though he's the poet's horse.
A double noose, thou on thy neck dost
pull,

For writing treason, and for writing dull.
To die for faction is a common evil,
But to be hanged for nonsense is the devil.

Hadst thou the glories of thy king ex-
pressed, 500

Thy praises had been satire at the best :
But thou, in clumsy verse, unlicked, un-
pointed,

Hast shamefully defied the Lord's anointed.

I will not rake the dunghill of thy crimes,
For who would read thy life that reads thy
rhymes?

But of king David's foes, be this the doom,
May all be like the young man Absalom;
And, for my foes, may this their blessing be,
To talk like Doeg, and to write like thee.

(*Dryden's lines end here.*)

Achitophel each rank, degree, and
age, 510

For various ends neglects not to engage:
The wise and rich, for purse and counsel
brought,

The fools and beggars, for their number
sought:

Who yet not only on the town depends,
For even in court the faction had its friends;
These thought the places they possessed too
small,

And in their hearts wished court and king
to fall;

Whose names the muse disdain, holds in
the dark,

Thrust in the villain herd without a mark;
With parasites and libel-spawning imps, 520
Intriguing fops, dull jesters, and worse
pimps.

Disdain the rascal rabble to pursue,
Their set cabals are yet a viler crew.
See where involved in common smoke they
sit,

Some for our mirth, some for our satire fit:
These gloomy, thoughtful, and on mischief
bent,

While those for mere good fellowship frequent

The appointed club, can let sedition pass,
Sense, nonsense, anything to employ the
glass;

And who believe, in their dull honest
hearts, 530

The rest talk treason but to show their parts;
Who ne'er had wit or will for mischief yet,
But pleased to be reputed of a set.

But in the sacred annals of our plot,
Industrious Arod * never be forgot:

* Arod] Sir William Waller, son of the Parliamentary general.

The labours of this midnight magistrate,
May vie with Corah's to preserve the state.
In search of arms he failed not to lay hold
On war's most powerful, dangerous weapon,
gold.

And last, to take from Jebusites all
odds, 540

Their altars pillaged, stole their very gods.
Oft would he cry, when treasure he surprised,

" 'Tis Baalish gold in David's coin disguised ; "

Which to his house with richer reliques came,
While lumber idols only fed the flame:

For our wise rabble ne'er took pains to
inquire,

What 'twas he burnt, so't made a rousing
fire.

With which our elder was enriched no more
Than false Gehazi with the Syrian's store;
So poor, that when our choosing-tribes were
met, 550

Even for his stinking votes he ran in debt;
For meat the wicked, and, as authors think,
The saints he choused for his electing drink
Thus every shift and subtle method past,
And all to be no Zaken † at the last.

Now, raised on Tyre's † sad ruins,
Pharaoh's pride

Soared high, his legions threatening far and
wide;

As when a battering storm engendered high,
By winds upheld, hangs hovering in the sky,
Is gazed upon by every trembling swain, 560

This for his vineyard fears, and that his
grain;

For blooming plants, and flowers new opening,
these

For lambs yeaned lately, and far-labouring
bees:

To guard his stock each to the gods does
call,

Uncertain where the fire-charged clouds will
fall:

† Zaken means a member of Parliament.

† Tyre is Holland. The success of Louis XIV.'s arms there had rendered him formidable all over Europe.

Ev'n so the doubtful nations watch his
arms,

With terror each expecting his alarms.

Where, Judah,* where was now thy lion's
roar?

Thou only couldst the captive lands re-
store;

But thou, with inbred broils and faction
pressed, 570

From Egypt need'st a guardian with the
rest.

Thy prince from Sanhedrims no trust
allowed,

Too much the representers of the crowd,
Who for their own defence give no supply,
But what the crown's prerogatives must buy:
As if their monarch's rights to violate
More needful were, than to preserve the
state!

From present dangers they divert their care,
And all their fears are of the royal heir;
Whom now the reigning malice of his
foes 580

Unjudged would sentence, and ere crowned
depose.

Religion the pretence, but their decree
To bar his reign, whate'er his faith shall be!
By Sanhedrims and clam'rous crowds thus
pressed,

What passions rent the righteous David's
breast?

Who knows not how to oppose or to comply,
Unjust to grant, and dangerous to deny!
How near in this dark juncture Israel's fate,
Whose peace one sole expedient could create,
Which yet the extremest virtue did re-
quire, 590

Even of that prince whose downfall they
conspire!

His absence David does with tears advise †
To appease their rage. Undaunted he com-
plies.

Thus he, who, prodigal of blood and ease,
A royal life exposed to winds and seas,

At once contending with the waves and fire,
And heading danger in the wars of Tyre,
Inglorious now forsakes his native sand,
And like an exile quits the promised land!
Our monarch scarce from pressing tears re-
frains, 600

And painfully his royal state maintains,
Who now embracing on the extremest shore
Almost revokes what he enjoined before:
Concludes at last more trust to be allowed
To storms and seas than to the raging
crowd.

Forbear, rash Muse, the parting scene to
draw,

With silence charmed as deep as theirs that
saw!

Not only our attending nobles weep,
But hardy sailors swell with tears the deep!
The tide restrained her course, and more
amazed 610

The twin-stars on the royal brothers gazed:
While this sole fear—

Does trouble to our suffering hero bring,
Lest next the popular rage oppress the
king!

Thus parting, each for the other's danger
grieved,

The shore the king, and seas the prince re-
ceived.

Go, injured hero, while propitious gales,
Soft as thy consort's breath, inspire thy
sails;

Well may she trust her beauties on a flood,
Where thy triumphant fleets so oft have
rode! 620

Safe on thy breast reclined, her rest be
deep,

Rocked like a Nereid by the waves asleep;
While happiest dreams her fancy entertain,
And to Elysian fields convert the main!
Go, injured hero, while the shores of Tyre
At thy approach so silent shall admire,
Who on thy thunder still their thoughts
employ,

And greet thy landing with a trembling joy.
On heroes thus the prophet's fate is
thrown,

Admired by every nation but their own; 630

* Judah is England, whose influence in Europe
had become almost nil.

† The Duke of York was obliged to retire to
Brussels, and afterwards to Scotland.

Yet while our factious Jews his worth
deny,

Their aching conscience gives their tongue
the lie.

Even in the worst of men the noblest parts
Confess him, and he triumphs in their
hearts,

Whom to his king the best respects com-
mend

Of subject, soldier, kinsman, prince and
friend :

All sacred names of most divine esteem,
And to perfection all sustained by him,
Wise, just, and constant, courtly without
art,

Swift to discern and to reward desert ; 640
No hour of his in fruitless ease destroyed,
But on the noblest subjects still employed :
Whose steady soul ne'er learnt to separate
Between his monarch's interest and the
state,

But heaps those blessings on the royal head,
Which he well knows, must be on subjects
shed.

On what pretence could then the vulgar
rage

Against his worth, and native rights engage?
Religious fears their argument are made,
Religious fears his sacred rights in-
vade ! 650

Of future superstition they complain,
And Jebusitic worship in his reign :
With such alarms his foes the crowd
deceive,

With dangers fright which not themselves
believe.

Since nothing can our sacred rites re-
move,

Whate'er the faith of the successor prove :
Our Jews their ark shall undisturbed retain,
At least while their religion is their gain,
Who know by old experience Baal's com-
mands

Not only claimed their conscience, but their
lands ; 660

They grudge God's tithes ; how therefore
shall they yield

An idol full possession of the field ?

Grant such a prince enthroned, we must
confess

The people's sufferings than that monarch's
less,

Who must to hard conditions still be bound,
And for his quiet with the crowd compound ;
Or should his thoughts to tyranny incline,
Where are the means to compass the
design ?

Our crown's revenues are too short a store,
And jealous Sanhedrims would give no
more. 670

As vain our fears of Egypt's potent aid,
Not so has Pharaoh learnt ambition's trade,
Nor ever with such measures can comply
As shock the common rules of policy ;
None dread like him the growth of Israel's
king,

And he alone sufficient aid can bring ;
Who knows that prince to Egypt can give
law,

That on our stubborn tribes his yoke could
draw :

At such profound expense he has not stood,
Nor dyed for this his hands so deep in
blood ; 680

Would ne'er through wrong and right his
progress take,
Grudge his own rest, and keep the world
awake,

To fix a lawless prince on Judah's throne,
First to invade our rights, and then his own ;
His dear-gained conquests cheaply to de-
spoil,

And reap the harvest of his crimes and toil.
We grant his wealth vast as our ocean's
sand,

And curse its fatal influence on our land,
Which our bribed Jews so numerously
partake,

That even an host his pensioners would
make. 690

From these deceivers our divisions spring,
Our weakness, and the growth of Egypt's
king ;

These, with pretended friendship to the
state,

Our crowd's suspicion of their prince create,

Both pleased and frightened with the
specious cry,
To guard their sacred rites and property.
To ruin, thus, the chosen flock are sold,
While wolves are ta'en for guardians of the
fold ;
Seduced by these we groundlessly complain
And loathe the manna of a gentle reign. 700
Thus our forefathers' crooked paths are
trod ;
We trust our prince no more than they
their God.
But all in vain our reasoning prophets
preach
To those whom sad experience ne'er could
teach,
Who can commence new broils in bleeding
scars,
And fresh remembrance of intestine wars ;
When the same household mortal foes did
yield,
And brothers stained with brothers' blood
the field ;
When sons' cursed steel the fathers' gore
did stain,
And mothers mourned for sons by fathers
slain ! 710
When, thick as Egypt's locusts on the sand,
Our tribes lay slaughtered through the
promised land,
Whose few survivors with worse fate remain
To drag the bondage of a tyrant's reign :
Which scene of woes, unknowing, we renew,
And madly, even those ills we fear, pursue ;
While Pharaoh laughs at our domestic
broils,
And safely crowds his tents with nations'
spoils.
Yet our fierce Sanhedrim, in restless rage,
Against our absent hero still engage, 720
And chiefly urge, such did their frenzy
prove,
The only suit their prince forbids to move,
Which till obtained, they cease affairs of
state,
And real dangers waive for groundless hate.
Long David's patience waits relief to bring,
With all the indulgence of a lawful king,

Expecting till the troubled waves would
cease,
But found the raging billows still increase.
The crowd, whose insolence forbearance
swells,
While he forgives too far, almost rebels. 730
At last his deep resentments silence broke ;
Th' imperial palace shook, while thus he
spoke :—
" Then Justice wake, and Rigour take her
time,
For, lo ! our mercy is become our crime.
While halting Punishment her stroke delays,
Our sovereign right, Heaven's sacred trust,
decays !
For whose support even subjects' interest
calls ;
Woe to that kingdom where the monarch
falls !
That prince who yields the least of regal
sway,
So far his people's freedom does betray. 740
Right lives by law, and law subsists by
power ;
Disarm the shepherd, wolves the flock
devour.
Hard lot of empire o'er a stubborn race,
Which Heaven itself in vain has tried with
grace !
When will our reason's long-charmed eyes
unclose,
And Israel judge between her friends and
foes ?
When shall we see expired deceivers' sway,
And credit what our God and monarchs
say ?
Dissembled patriots bribed with Egypt's
gold,
Even Sanhedrim in blind obedience
hold ; 750
Those patriots falsehood in their actions see,
And judge by the pernicious fruit the tree :
If aught for which so loudly they declaim,
Religion, laws, and freedom, were their
aim,
Our senates in due methods they had led
To avoid those mischiefs which they seemed
to dread ;

But first, ere yet they propped the sinking state,
 To impeach and charge, as urged by private hate,
 Proves that they ne'er believed the fears they pressed,
 But barbarously destroyed the nation's rest ! 780
 Oh ! whither will ungoverned senates drive,
 And to what bounds licentious votes arrive?
 When their injustice we are pressed to share,
 The monarch urged to exclude the lawful heir ;
 Are princes thus distinguished from the crowd,
 And this the privilege of royal blood ?
 But grant we should confirm the wrongs they press,
 His sufferings yet were than the people's less ;
 Condemned for life the murdering sword to wield,
 And on their heirs entail a bloody field : 790
 Thus madly their own freedom they betray,
 And for the oppression which they fear make way ;
 Succession fixed by Heaven, the kingdom's bar,
 Which once dissolved, admits the flood of war ;
 Waste, rapine, spoil, without the assault begin,
 And our mad tribes supplant the fence within.
 Since then their good they will not understand,
 'Tis time to take the monarch's power in hand ;
 Authority and force to join with skill,
 And save the lunatics against their will. 790
 The same rough means that 'suage the crowd, appease
 Our senates raging with the crowd's disease.
 Henceforth unbiassed measures let them draw
 From no false gloss, but genuine text of law ;
 Nor urge those crimes upon religion's score,
 Themselves so much in Jebusites abhor.

Whom laws convict, and only they, shall bleed,
 Nor Pharisees by Pharisees be freed.
 Impartial justice from our throne shall shower,
 All shall have right, and we our sovereign power." 790
 He said, the attendants heard with awful joy,
 And glad presages their fixed thoughts employ ;
 From Hebron now the suffering heir returned,
 A realm that long with civil discord mourned ;
 Till his approach, like some arriving god,
 Composed and healed the place of his abode ;
 The deluge checked, that to Judea spread,
 And stopped sedition at the fountain's head.
 Thus in forgiving David's paths he drives,
 And chased from Israel, Israel's peace contrives. 800
 The field confessed his power in arms before,
 And seas proclaimed his triumphs to the shore ;
 As nobly has his sway in Hebron shown,*
 How fit to inherit godlike David's throne.
 Through Sion's streets his glad arrival's spread,
 And conscious Faction shrinks her snaky head ;
 His train their sufferings think o'erpaid to see
 The crowd's applause with virtue once agree.
 Success charms all, but zeal for worth distressed,
 A virtue proper to the brave and best ; 810
 'Mongst whom was Jothran, Jothran † always bent
 To serve the crown, and loyal by descent,
 Whose constancy so firm, and conduct just,
 Deserved at once two royal masters' trust ;

* The Duke of York showed so much toleration in Scotland that seven bishops thanked him for it.

† ——— Jothran always bent
 To serve the crown, and loyal by descent.)
 Jothran—Lord Dartmouth.

Who Tyre's proud arms had manfully
withstood
On seas, and gathered laurels from the
flood;
Of learning yet no portion was denied,
Friend to the Muses and the Muses' pride.
Nor can Benaiah's * worth forgotten lie,
Of steady soul when public storms were
high; 830
Whose conduct, while the Moor fierce
onsets made,
Secured at once our honour and our trade.
Such were the chiefs who most his suffer-
ings mourned,
And viewed with silent joy the prince re-
turned,
While those that sought his absence to
betray,
Press first their nauseous false respects to
pay;
Him still the officious hypocrites molest,
And with malicious duty break his rest.
While real transports thus his friends
employ,
And foes are loud in their dissembled
joy, 830
His triumphs so resounded far and near,
Missed not his young ambitious rival's ear;
And as when joyful hunters' clam'rous train
Some slumbering lion wakes in Moab's
plain,
Who oft had forced the bold assailants
yield,
And scattered his pursuers through the field,
Disdaining, furls his mane and tears the
ground,
His eyes inflaming all the desert round,
With roar of seas directs his chasers' way,
Provokes from far, and dares them to the
fray; 840
Such rage stormed now in Absalom's fierce
breast,
Such indignation his fired eyes confessed.

Where now was the instructor of his
pride?
Slept the old pilot in so rough a tide?
Whose wives had from the happy shore
betrayed,
And thus on shelves the credulous youth
conveyed.
In deep revolving thoughts he weighs his
state,
Secure of craft, nor doubts to baffle fate;
At least, if his stormed bark must go adrift,
To baulk his charge, and for himself to
shift. 850
In which his dextrous wit had oft been shown,
And in the wreck of kingdoms saved his
own;
But now with more than common danger
pressed,
Of various resolutions stands possessed,
Perceives the crowd's unstable zeal decay,
Lest their recanting chief the cause betray,
Who on a father's grace his hopes may
ground,
And for his pardon with their heads com-
pound.
Him, therefore, ere his fortune slip her time,
The statesman plots to engage in some bold
crime 860
Past pardon, whether to attempt his bed,
Or threat with open arms the royal head,
Or other daring method, and unjust,
That may secure him in the people's trust.
But failing thus to ensnare him, nor secure
How long his foiled ambition may endure,
Plots next to lay him by as past his date,
And try some new pretender's luckier fate;
Whose hopes with equal toil he would
pursue,
Nor cares what claimer's crowned, except
the true. 870
Wake, Absalom, approaching ruin shun,
And see, oh, see, for whom thou art un-
done!
How are thy honours and thy fame betrayed,
The property of desperate villains made!
Lost power and conscious fears their crimes
create,
And guilt in them was little less than fate:

* *Nor can Benaiah's worth forgotten lie,*
Benaiah—Colonel, afterwards General Sackville,
a gentleman of tried courage and known good
sense: he was of the Dorset family, and had
served at Tangier with reputation.

But why shouldst thou, from every grievance
 free,
 Forsake thy vineyards for their stormy sea?
 For thee did Canaan's milk and honey flow,
 Love dressed thy bowers, and laurels sought
 thy brow, 880
 Preferment, wealth, and power thy vassals
 were,
 And of a monarch all things but the care.
 Oh, should our crimes again that curse draw
 down,
 And rebel-arms once more attempt the
 crown,
 Sure ruin waits unhappy Absalon,
 Alike by conquest or defeat undone!
 Who could relentless see such youth and
 charms
 Expire with wretched fate in impious arms?
 A prince so formed, with earth's and
 Heaven's applause,
 To triumph o'er crowned heads in David's
 cause : 890
 Or grant him victor, still his hopes must fail,
 Who conquering would not for himself
 prevail ;
 The faction, whom he trusts for future sway,
 Him and the public would alike betray ;
 Amongst themselves divide the captive state,
 And found their hydra-empire in his fate !
 Thus having beat the clouds with painful
 flight,
 The pitted youth, with sceptres in his
 sight,
 (So have their cruel politics decreed,)
 Must by that crew, that made him guilty,
 bleed ! 900
 For, could their pride brook any prince's
 sway,
 Whom but mild David would they choose
 to obey ?
 Who once at such a gentle reign repine,
 The fall of monarchy itself design ;
 From hate to that their reformations spring,
 And David not their grievance, but the
 king.
 Seized now with panic fear the faction lies,
 Lest this clear truth strike Absalom's
 charmed eyes,

Lest he perceive, from long enchantment
 free,
 What all beside the flattered youth must
 see. 910
 But whate'er doubts his troubled bosom
 swell,
 Fair carriage still became Achitophel ;
 Who now an envious festival installs,*
 And to survey their strength the faction
 calls,
 Which fraud, religious worship too must
 gild ;
 But, oh, how weakly does sedition build !
 For, lo ! the royal mandate issues forth,
 Dashing at once their treason, zeal, and
 mirth !
 So have I seen disastrous chance invade,
 Where careful emmets had their forage
 laid, 920
 Whether fierce Vulcan's rage the furzy
 plain
 Had seized, engendered by some careless
 swain,
 Or swelling Neptune lawless inroads made,
 And to their cell of store his flood
 conveyed ;
 The commonwealth broke up, distracted
 go,
 And in wild haste their loaded mates o'er-
 throw :
 Even so our scattered guests confusedly
 meet,
 With boiled, baked, roast, all justling in
 the street ;
 Dejected all, and ruefully dismayed,
 For shekel, without treat, or treason,
 paid. 930

* — Achitophel ;
*Who now an envious festival installs,
 And to survey their strength the faction calls,*
 The Duke of York being invited to dine at
 Merchant Tailors' Hall with the Company of
 Artillery, of which he was captain-general, on
 the 21st of April 1682, tickets were dispersed in
 opposition to, and contempt of, this meeting ;
 inviting the nobility, gentry, and citizens, who
 wished well to the Protestant religion, to convene
 the same day at St. Michael's Church, Cornhill,
 and thence proceed to dine at Haberdashers'
 Hall : but this association was stopped by an
 order of council. — DERRICK.

Sedition's dark eclipse now fainter shows,
More bright each hour the royal planet
grows,

Of force the clouds of envy to disperse,
In kind conjunction of assisting stars.
Here, labouring Muse, those glorious chiefs
relate,

That turned the doubtful scale of David's
fate ;

The rest of that illustrious band rehearse,
Immortalised in laurelled Asaph's verse : *
Hard task ! yet will not I thy flight recall,
View heaven, and then enjoy thy glorious
fall. 940

First write Bezaiel,† whose illustrious
name

Foretells our praise, and gives his poet fame.
The Kenites' rocky province his command,
A barren limb of fertile Canaan's land ;
Which for its generous natives yet could be
Held worthy such a president as he !
Bezaiel with each grace and virtue fraught,
Serene his looks, serene his life and
thought ;

On whom so largely nature heaped her
store,

There scarce remained for arts to give him
more ! 950

To aid the crown and state his greatest
zeal,

His second care that service to conceal ;
Of dues observant, firm to every trust : ‡
And to the needy always more than just :
Who truth from specious falsehood can
divide,

Has all the gownsmen's skill without their
pride ;

Thus crowned with worth from heights of
honour won,

Sees all his glories copied in his son,§

* ——— *laurelled Asaph's verse* :] Asaph was
a writer of the Psalms ; *Dryden* is meant, who
was Poet Laureate.

† *First write Bezaiel*,] Bezaiel, the Marquis
of Worcester, created Duke of Beaufort in 1682.
Kenites—the Welsh.

‡ First edition : firm in every trust.

§ Charles Somerset, Lord Herbert of Raglan
in Monmouthshire.

Whose forward fame should every muse
engage ;

Whose youth boasts skill denied to others'
age. 960

Men, manners, language, books of noblest
kind,

Already are the conquest of his mind.

Whose loyalty before its date was prime ;

Nor waited the dull course of rolling time :

The monster faction early he dismayed,

And David's cause long since confessed his
aid,

Brave Abdael o'er the prophets' school
was placed ;

Abdael with all his father's virtue graced ; ||
A hero, who, while stars looked wondering
down,

Without one Hebrew's blood restored the
crown. 970

That praise was his ; what therefore did re-
main

For following chiefs, but boldly to maintain
That crown restored ? and in this rank of
fame,

Brave Abdael with the first a place must
claim.

Proceed, illustrious, happy chief, proceed,

Foreseize the garlands for thy brow decreed,

While the inspired tribe attend with noblest
strain

To register the glories thou shalt gain :

For sure the dew shall Gilboah's hills forsake,

And Jordan mix his stream with Sodom's
lake, 980

Or seas retired their secret stores disclose,

And to the sun their scaly brood expose,

Or swelled above the cliffs their billows
raise,

Before the muses leave their patron's praise.

Eliab ** our next labour does invite,

And hard the task to do Eliab right :

|| *Abdael* is the second Duke of Albemarle, the
son of the General Monk who restored the King
and was created Duke of Albemarle.

** *Eliab*] Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington.
He was made Secretary of State, Earl of Arling-
ton, and Lord Chamberlain to Charles II. and
James II. He was the son of a private gentle-
man, but had followed the princes into exile.

Long with the royal wanderer he roved,
And firm in all the turns of fortune proved !*
Such ancient service and desert so large,
Well claimed the royal household for his
charge. 990

His age with only one mild heiress blessed,
In all the bloom of smiling nature dressed,
And blessed again to see his flower allied
'To David's stock, and made young Othniel's
bride ! †

'The bright restorer of his father's youth,
Devoted to a son's and subject's truth :
Resolved to bear that prize of duty home,
So bravely sought, while sought by Absalom.
Ah prince ! the illustrious planet of thy birth,
And thy more powerful virtue guard thy
worth ; 1000

That no Achitophel thy ruin boast !
Israel too much in one such wreck has
lost.

Even envy must consent to Helon's
worth, ‡

Whose soul, though Egypt glories in his
birth,
Could for our captive ark its zeal retain,
And Pharaoh's altars in their pomp disdain :
'To slight his gods was small ; with nobler
pride,

He all the allurements of his court defied :
Whom profit nor example could betray,
But Israel's friend, and true to David's
sway. 1010

What acts of favour in his province fall,
On merit he confers, and freely all.

Our list of nobles next let Amri § grace,
Whose merits claimed the Abbeddin's high
place ;

Who, with a loyalty that did excel,
Brought all the endowments of Achitophel.
Sincere was Amri, and not only knew,
But Israel's sanctions into practice drew ;

* First edition had *fortunes*.

† *Othniel* was Henry Duke of Grafton, son of the King and the Duchess of Cleveland.

‡ *Helon*, the Earl of Feversham, nephew to Mareschal Turenne.

§ *Amri* is Sir Heneage Finch, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal.

Our laws, that did a boundless ocean seem.
Were coasted all, and fathomed all by
him. 1020

No rabbin speaks like him their mystic
sense,

So just, and with such charms of eloquence :
To whom the double blessing does belong,
With Moses' inspiration, Aaron's tongue.

Than Sheva || none more loyal zeal have
shown,

Wakeful as Judah's lion for the crown,
Who for that cause still combats in his age,
For which his youth with danger did en-
gage.

In vain our factious priests the cant revive ;
In vain seditious scribes with libel strive 1030
To inflame the crowd ; while he with watch-
ful eye

Observes, and shoots their treasons as they
fly ;

Their weekly frauds his keen replies detect ;
He undeceives more fast than they infect.

So Moses when the pest on legions preyed,
Advanced his signal, and the plague was
stayed.

Once more, my fainting muse, thy pinions
try,

And strength's exhausted store let love
supply.

What tribute, Asaph, shall we render thee ?
We'll crown thee with a wreath from thy
own tree ! 1040

Thy laurel grove no envy's flash can blast ;
The song of Asaph shall for ever last.

With wonder late posterity shall dwell
On Absalom and false Achitophel :

Thy strains shall be our slumbering pro-
phets' dream,

And when our Sion virgins sing their theme,
Our jubilees shall with thy verse be graced ;

The song of Asaph shall for ever last.
How fierce his satire loosed ; restrained,
how tame ;

How tender of the offending young man's
fame ! 1050

|| Sir Roger L'Estrange, a writer on the side of the Government.

How well his worth, and brave adventures
 styled ;

Just to his virtues, to his error mild.

No page of thine that fears the strictest view,

But teems with just reproof, or praise as due ;

Not Eden could a fairer prospect yield,

All paradise without one barren field :

Whose wit the censure of his foes has
 passed ;

The song of Asaph shall for ever last.

What praise for such rich strains shall we
 allow ?

What just rewards the grateful crown be-
 stow ? 1060

While bees in flowers rejoice, and flowers
 in dew,

While stars and fountains to their course
 are true ;

While Judah's throne, and Sion's rock
 stand fast

The song of Asaph and the fame shall last.

Still Hebron's honoured happy soil retains

Our royal hero's beauteous dear remains ;

Who now sails off with winds nor wishes
 slack,

To bring his sufferings' bright companion
 back.*

But ere such transport can our sense employ,

A bitter grief must poison half our joy ; † 1070

Nor can our coasts restored those blessings
 see

Without a bribe to envious destiny !

Cursed Sodom's doom for ever fix the tide

Where by inglorious chance the valiant died.

Give not insulting Askalon to know,

Nor let Gath's daughters triumph in our
 woe !

No sailor with the news swell Egypt's pride,

By what inglorious fate our valiant died !

Weep, Arnon ! Jordan, weep thy fountain's
 dry !

While Sion's rock dissolves for a supply. 1080

* Mary of Modena, his duchess.

† Early in the morning of the 5th, the Duke's yacht, the *Gloster*, struck upon a sandbank, and soon went to the bottom, carrying with her one hundred and thirty stout men, several people of quality, and many of the Duke's servants.

Calm were the elements, night's silence
 deep,

The waves scarce murmuring, and the winds
 asleep ;

Yet fate for ruin takes so still an hour,

And treacherous sands the princely bark
 devour ;

Then death unworthy seized a generous race,
 To virtue's scandal, and the stars' disgrace !

Oh ! had the indulgent Powers vouchsafed
 to yield,

Instead of faithless shelves, a listed field ;

A listed field of Heaven's and David's foes,
 Fierce as the troops that did his youth op-

pose, 1090

Each life had on his slaughtered heap retired,

Not tamely, and unconquering thus expired :

But destiny is now their only foe,

And dying, even o'er that they triumph too ;
 With loud last breaths their master's 'scape

applaud,
 Of whom kind force could scarce the fates

defraud ;

Who for such followers lost, oh, matchless
 mind,

At his own safety now almost repined !

Say, royal Sir, by all your fame in arms,

Your praise in peace, and by Urania's
 charms ; 1100

If all your sufferings passed so nearly pressed,
 Or pierced with half so painful grief your

breast ?

Thus some diviner muse her hero forms,
 Not soothed with soft delights, but tossed

in storms.

Not stretched on roses in the myrtle grove,
 Nor crowns his days with mirth, his nights

with love,

But far removed in thundering camps is
 found,

His slumbers short, his bed the herbless
 ground :

In tasks of danger always seen the first,

Feeds from the hedge, and slakes with ice
 his thirst. 1110

Long must his patience strive with fortune's
 rage,

And long opposing gods themselves engage,

Must see his country flame, his friends
destroyed,

Before the promised empire be enjoyed :

Such toil of fate must build a man of
fame,

And such, to Israel's crown, the godlike
David came.

What sudden beams dispel the clouds so
fast,

Whose drenching rains laid all our vine-
yards waste ?

The spring so far behind her course delayed,
On the instant is in all her bloom ar-
rayed ;

1120

The winds breathe low, the element serene ;
Yet mark what motion in the waves is
seen !

Thronging and busy as Hyblæan swarms,
Or straggled soldiers summoned to their
arms.

See where the princely bark, in loosest
pride,

With all her guardian fleet, adorns the tide !

High on her deck the royal lovers stand,*
Our crimes to pardon ere they touched our
land.

Welcome to Israel and to David's breast !
Here all your toils, here all your sufferings
rest.

1130

This year did Ziloah † rule Jerusalem,
And boldly all sedition's surges stem,
Howe'er encumbered with a viler pair
Than Ziph or Shimei to assist the chair ;
Yet Ziloah's loyal labours so prevailed,
That faction at the next election failed,
When even the common cry did justice
sound,

And merit by the multitude was crowned :
With David then was Israel's peace re-
stored,

Crowds mourned their error, and obeyed
their lord.

1140

* The Duke of York and Princess Mary Bea-
trice of Modena.

† *Ziloah* was Sir John Moore, Lord Mayor of
London in 1681, and an M.P.

KEY TO ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

ABDAEL	{ General Monk, Duke of Albemarle.	HEBRON	Scotland.
ABBETHDIN	{ The name given, through this Poem, to a Lord Chancellor in general.	HEBREW PRIESTS	{ The Church of England Clergy.
ABSALOM	Duke of Monmouth.	HELON	Earl of Feversham.
ACHITOPHEL	{ The Earl of Shaftesbury.	HUSHAI	{ Hyde, Earl of Rochester.
ADRIEL	Earl of Mulgrave.	ISHBAN	Sir Robert Clayton.
AGAG	{ Sir Edmondbury Godfrey.	ISHBOSHETH	Richard Cromwell.
AMIEL	{ Mr. Seymour, Speaker of the House of Commons.	ISRAEL	England.
AMRI	{ Sir Heneage Finch, Earl of Winchelsea, and Lord Chancellor	ISSACHAR	Thomas Thynne, Esq.
ANNABEL	Duchess of Monmouth.	JEBUSITES	Papists.
AROD	Sir William Waller.	JERUSALEM	London.
ASAPH	{ A Character drawn by Tate for Dryden, in the Second Part of this Poem.	JEWS	English.
BALAAM	Earl of Huntingdon.	JONAS	Sir William Jones.
BALAK	Burnet.	JORDAN	Dover.
BARZILLAI	Duke of Ormond.	JOTHAM	Marquis of Halifax.
BATHSHEBA	{ Duchess of Portsmouth.	JOTHRAN	Lord Dartmouth.
BENAIAH	General Sackville.	JUDAS	{ Mr. Ferguson, a canting Teacher.
BEN JOCHANAN	{ Rev. Mr. Samuel Johnson.	MEPHIBOSHETH	Pordage.
BEZALIEL	Duke of Beaufort.	MICHAEL	Queen Catharine.
CALEB	Lord Grey.	NADAB	{ Lord Howard of Es- crick.
CORAH	Dr. Oates.	OG	Shadwell.
DAVID	Charles II.	PHALEG	Forbes.
DOEG	Elkanah Settle.	PHARAOH	King of France.
EGYPT	France.	RABSHEKA	Sir Thomas Player
ELIAB	{ Sir Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington.	SAGAN OF JERUSALEM	{ Dr. Compton, Bishop of London.
ETHNIC PLOT	The Popish Plot.	SANHEDRIM	Parliament.
GATH	{ The land of Exile, more particularly Brussels, where King Charles II. long resided.	SAUL	Oliver Cromwell.
		SHIMEI	Sheriff Bethel.
		SHEVA	Sir Roger Lestrang.
		SOLYMEAN ROUL	London Rebels.
		TYRE	Holland.
		UZZA	Jack Hall.
		ZADOC	{ Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury.
		ZAKEN	{ A Member of the House of Commons.
		ZILOAH	Sir John Moore.
		ZIMRI	{ Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

THE MEDAL.
A SATIRE AGAINST SEDITION.

‘Per Graium populos mediæque per Elidis urbem
Ibat ovans, Divumque sibi poscebat honorem.’—*VIRG. ÆN.* vi. 558.

NOTE.

The rejection of the bill of high treason presented against the Earl of Shaftesbury was followed by the issue of a Medal in honour of his acquittal. On one side of it was a portrait of Shaftesbury ; on the other, the Tower and London Bridge, with the rising sun shining through a cloud, and the motto, " Latamur."

Spence says that Charles II. suggested to Dryden the idea of the poem when walking one day in the Mall in St. James's Park, and described how he himself would write it. Dryden obeyed the suggestion, wrote the "Medal," and took it to the King, who presented him with a hundred broad pieces for it. It was published in March 1682, and it is said that its satire hastened Lord Shaftesbury's death.

THE MEDAL.

A SATIRE AGAINST SEDITION.

AN EPISTLE TO THE WHIGS.

FOR to whom can I dedicate this poem, with so much justice as to you? 'Tis the representation of your own hero: 'tis the picture drawn at length, which you admire and prize so much in little. None of your ornaments are wanting; neither the landscape of the Tower, nor the rising sun; nor the Anno Domini of your new sovereign's coronation.* This must needs be a grateful undertaking to your whole party; especially to those who have not been so happy as to purchase the original. I hear the graver has made a good market of it: all his kings are bought up already; or the value of the remainder so enhanced, that many a poor Polander,† who would be glad to worship the image, is not able to go to the cost of him, but must be content to see him here. I must confess I am no great artist; but sign-post painting will serve the turn to remember a friend by, especially when better is not to be had. Yet for your comfort the lineaments are true; and though he sat not five times to me, as he did to B.,‡ yet I have consulted history, as the Italian painters do, when they would draw a Nero, or a Caligula; though they have not seen the man, they can help their imagination by a statue of him, and find out the colouring from Suetonius and Tacitus. Truth is, you might have spared one side of your Medal: the head would be seen to more advantage if it were placed on a spike of the Tower, a little nearer to the sun, which would then break out to better purpose.

You tell us in your preface to the "No-Protestant Plot," § that you shall be forced hereafter to leave off your modesty: I suppose you mean that little which is left you; for it was worn to rags when you put out this Medal. Never was there practised such a piece of notorious impudence in the face of an established government. I believe, when he is

* The "Medal" alluded to, and which the poem satirises, was one struck in commemoration of the Grand Jury having thrown out the bill of high treason brought against Lord Shaftesbury.

† There was an absurd report about, that Shaftesbury wished to be elected King of Poland at the time John Sobieski was chosen.—TODD.

‡ Bower, the engraver.

§ A folio pamphlet with this title, vindicating Lord Shaftesbury from being concerned in any treasonable designs, was published in two parts, the first in 1681, the second in 1682. It was supposed to have been written by the Earl himself.

dead, you will wear him in thumb-rings, as the Turks did Scanderbeg ; * as if there were virtue in his bones to preserve you against monarchy. Yet all this while you pretend not only zeal for the public good, but a due veneration for the person of the King. But all men who can see an inch before them, may easily detect those gross fallacies. That it is necessary for men in your circumstances to pretend both, is granted you ; for without them there could be no ground to raise a faction. But I would ask you one civil question : What right has any man among you, or any association of men (to come nearer to you), who, out of Parliament, cannot be considered in a public capacity, to meet as you daily do in factious clubs, to vilify the Government in your discourses, and to libel it in all your writings ? Who made you judges in Israel ? Or how is it consistent with your zeal to the public welfare to promote sedition ? Does your definition of loyal, which is to serve the King according to the laws, allow you the licence of traducing the executive power with which you own he is invested ? You complain that his Majesty has lost the love and confidence of his people ; and by your very urging it, you endeavour what in you lies to make him lose them. All good subjects abhor the thought of arbitrary power, whether it be in one or many ; if you were the patriots you would seem, you would not at this rate incense the multitude to assume it ; for no sober man can fear it, either from the King's disposition, or his practice, or, even where you would odiously lay it, from his Ministers. Give us leave to enjoy the government and the benefit of laws under which we were born, and which we desire to transmit to our posterity. You are not the trustees of the public liberty ; and if you have not right to petition in a crowd, much less have you to intermeddle in the management of affairs, or to arraign what you do not like, which in effect is everything that is done by the King and Council. Can you imagine that any reasonable man will believe you respect the person of his Majesty, when 'tis apparent that your seditious pamphlets are stuffed with particular reflections on him ? If you have the confidence to deny this, 'tis easy to be evinced from a thousand passages, which I only forbear to quote, because I desire they should die, and be forgotten. I have perused many of your papers ; and to show you that I have, the third part of your " No-Protestant Plot " is much of it stolen from your dead author's † pamphlet, called the " Growth of Popery " ; as manifestly as Milton's " Defence of the English People " is from Buchanan, " De jure regni apud Scotos " ; or your first Covenant and new Association from the Holy League of the French Guisards. Any one who reads Davila, may trace your practices all along. There were the same pretences for reformation and loyalty, the same aspersions of the King, and the same grounds of a rebellion. I know not whether you will take the historian's word, who says it was reported that Poltrot, a Hugonot, murdered Francis Duke of Guise, by the instigations of Theodore Beza, or that it was a Hugonot minister, otherwise called a Presbyterian (for our Church abhors so devilish a tenet), who first writ a treatise of the lawfulness of deposing and murdering kings of a different persuasion in religion : but I am able to prove, from the doctrine of Calvin, and principles of Buchanan, that they set the people above the magistrate ; which, if I mistake not, is your own fundamental, and which carries your loyalty no further than your liking. When a vote of the House of Commons goes on your side, you are as ready to observe it as if it were passed into

* *Scanderbeg* ;] George Castriot, Prince of Albania, but reared in the Mahomedan faith while he was a hostage to Amurath II. He fought bravely and successfully against the Turks, who thus commemorated his valour.

† Andrew Marvel, the poet ; he died in 1678.

a law ; but when you are pinched with any former and yet unrepealed Act of Parliament, you declare that in some cases you will not be obliged by it. The passage is in the same third part of the "No-Protestant Plot," and is too plain to be denied. The late copy of your intended association you neither wholly justify nor condemn ; but as the Papists, when they are unopposed, fly out into all the pageantries of worship, but in times of war, when they are hard pressed by arguments, lie close entrenched behind the Council of Trent, so now, when your affairs are in a low condition, you dare not pretend that to be a legal combination, but whensoever you are afloat, I doubt not but it will be maintained and justified to purpose. For indeed there is nothing to defend it but the sword : 'tis the proper time to say anything, when men have all things in their power.

In the meantime, you would fain be nibbling at a parallel betwixt this association and that in the time of Queen Elizabeth. But there is this small difference betwixt them, that the ends of the one are directly opposite to the other : one with the Queen's approbation and conjunction, as head of it, the other without either the consent or knowledge of the King, against whose authority it is manifestly designed. Therefore you do well to have recourse to your last evasion, that it was contrived by your enemies, and shuffled into the papers that were seized ; which yet you see the nation is not so easy to believe as your own jury : but the matter is not difficult, to find twelve men in Newgate who would acquit a malefactor.

I have one only favour to desire of you at parting, that when you think of answering this poem, you would employ the same pens against it, who have combated with so much success against "Absalom and Achitophel ;" for then you may assure yourselves of a clear victory, without the least reply. Rail at me abundantly ; and, not to break a custom, do it without wit : by this method you will gain a considerable point, which is, wholly to waive the answer of my arguments. Never own the bottom of your principles, for fear they should be treason. Fall severely on the miscarriages of Government ; for if scandal be not allowed, you are no free-born subjects. If God has not blessed you with the talent of rhyming, make use of my poor stock and welcome : let your verses run upon my feet ; and, for the utmost refuge of notorious blockheads, reduced to the last extremity of sense, turn my own lines upon me and, in utter despair of your own satire, make me satirise myself. Some of you have been driven to this bay already ; but, above all the rest, commend me to the Nonconformist parson who writes the "Whip and Key." I am afraid it is not read so much as the piece deserves, because the bookseller is every week crying help at the end of his gazette, to get it off. You see I am charitable enough to do him a kindness, that it may be published as well as printed ; and that so much skill in Hebrew derivations may not lie for waste-paper in the shop. Yet I half suspect he went no farther for his learning than the index of Hebrew names and etymologies, which is printed at the end of some English Bibles. If Achitophel signify the brother of a fool, the author of that poem will pass with his readers for the next of kin. And perhaps it is the relation that makes the kindness. Whatever the verses are, buy them up, I beseech you, out of pity ; for I hear the conventicle is shut up, and the brother of Achitophel out of service.

Now footmen, you know, have the generosity to make a purse for a member of their society who has had his livery pulled over his ears ; and even Protestant socks are bought up among you, out of veneration to the name. A dissenter in poetry from sense and English will make as good a Protestant rhymers, as a dissenter from the Church of England a Protestant parson. Besides, if you encourage a young beginner, who knows

but he may elevate his style a little above the vulgar epithets of profane, and saucy Jack, and atheistical scribbler, with which he treats me, when the fit of enthusiasm is strong upon him ; by which well-mannered and charitable expressions I was certain of his sect before I knew his name. What would you have more of a man ? He has damned me in your cause from Genesis to the Revelations ; and has half the texts of both the Testaments against me, if you will be so civil to yourselves as to take him for your interpreter, and not to take them for Irish witnesses. After all, perhaps you will tell me, that you retained him only for the opening of your cause, and that your main lawyer is yet behind. Now if it so happen he meet with no more reply than his predecessors, you may either conclude that I trust to the goodness of my cause, or fear my adversary, or disdain him, or what you please, for the short on't is, 'tis indifferent to your humble servant, whatever your party says or thinks of him.

THE MEDAL.

OF all our antic sights and pageantry,
Which English idiots run in crowds to see,
The Polish Medal bears the prize alone :
A monster, more the favourite of the town
Than either fairs or theatres have shown.
Never did art so well with nature strive ;
Nor ever idol seemed so much alive :
So like the man ; so golden to the sight,
So base within, so counterfeit and light.
One side is filled with title and with face ; 10
And, lest the king should want a regal place,
On the reverse, a tower the town surveys ;
O'er which our mounting sun his beams dis-
plays.
The word, pronounced aloud by shrival
voice,
Lætatur, which, in Polish, is *Rejoice*.
The day, month, year, to the great act are
joined,
And a new canting holiday designed.
Five days he sat, for every cast and look ;
Four more than God to finish Adam took.
But who can tell what essence angels are, 20
Or how long Heaven was making Lucifer ?
Oh, could the style that copied every grace,
And ploughed such furrows for an eunuch
face,
Could it have formed his ever-changing will,
The various piece had tired the graver's
skill !
A martial hero first, with early care,
Blown, like a pigmy by the winds, to war.
A beardless chief, a rebel, ere a man :
So young his hatred to his prince began.
Next this, (how wildly will ambition
steer !)
A vermin wriggling in the Usurper's ear.

Bartering his venal wit for sums of gold,
He cast himself into the saint-like mould ;
Groaned, sighed, and prayed, while godliness
was gain,
The loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train.
But, as 'tis hard to cheat a juggler's eyes.
His open lewdness he could ne'er disguise.
There split the saint ; for hypocritic zeal
Allows no sins but those it can conceal.
Whoring to scandal gives too large a
scope : 40
Saints must not trade ; but they may interlope.
The ungodly principle was all the same ;
But a gross cheat betrays his partner's
game.
Besides, their pace was formal, grave, and
slack ;
His nimble wit outran the heavy pack.
Yet still he found his fortune at a stay ;
Whole droves of blockheads choking up his
way ;
They took, but not rewarded, his advice ;
Villain and wit exact a double price.
Power was his aim : but, thrown from that
pretence, 50
The wretch turned loyal in his own defence ;
And malice reconciled him to his prince.
Him in the anguish of his soul he served ;
Rewarded faster still than he deserved.
Behold him now exalted into trust ;
His counsel's oft convenient, seldom just .
Even in the most sincere advice he gave,
He had a grudging still to be a knave.
The frauds he learned in his fanatic years
Made him uneasy in his lawful gears. 60
At best as little honest as he could,
And, like white witches, mischievously good.

To his first bias longingly he leans ;
 And rather would be great by wicked means.
 Thus framed for ill, he loosed our triple hold ;
 Advice unsafe, precipitous and bold.
 From hence those tears ! that Ilium of our
 woe !

Who helps a powerful friend, forearms a foe.
 What wonder if the waves prevail so far,
 When he cut down the banks that made the
 bar ? 70

Seas follow but their nature to invade ;
 But he by art our native strength betrayed.
 So Samson to his foe his force confessed ;
 And to be shorn, lay slumbering on her breast.
 But when this fatal counsel, found too late,
 Exposed its author to the public hate ;
 When his just sovereign, by no impious way
 Could be seduced to arbitrary sway ;
 Forsaken of that hope he shifts the sail,
 Drives down the current with a popular
 gale ; 80

And shows the fiend confessed without a veil.
 He preaches to the crowd, that power is lent,
 But not conveyed to kingly government ;
 That claims successive bear no binding force,
 That coronation oaths are things of course ;
 Maintains the multitude can never err ;
 And sets the people in the papal chair.
 The reason's obvious : interest never lies ;
 The most have still their interest in their eyes ;
 The power is always theirs, and power is ever
 wise. 90

Almighty crowd, thou shortenest all dispute ;
 Power is thy essence, wit thy attribute !
 Nor faith nor reason make thee at a stay,
 Thou leap'st o'er all eternal truths in thy
 Pindaric way !

Athens no doubt did righteously decide,
 When Phocion and when Socrates were tried ;
 As righteously they did those dooms repent ;
 Still they were wise whatever way they went :
 Crowds err not, though to both extremes
 they run ;

To kill the father and recall the son. 100
 Some think the fools were most as times
 went then,

But now the world's o'erstocked with prudent
 men.

The common cry is even religion's test,
 The Turk's is at Constantinople best ;
 Idols in India ; Popery at Rome ;
 And our own worship only true at home.
 And true, but for the time ; 'tis hard to
 know

How long we please it shall continue so.
 This side to-day, and that to-morrow burns ;
 So all are God-a-mighties in their turns. 110
 A tempting doctrine, plausible and new ;
 What fools our fathers were, if this be true !
 Who, to destroy the seeds of civil war,
 Inherent right in monarchs did declare :
 And, that a lawful power might never cease,
 Secured succession to secure our peace.
 Thus property and sovereign sway, at last,
 In equal balances were justly cast :
 But this new Jehu spurs the hot-mouthed
 horse ;

Instructs the beast to know his native force ; 120
 To take the bit between his teeth, and fly
 To the next headlong steep of anarchy.
 Too happy England, if our good we knew,
 Would we possess the freedom we pursue !
 The lavish government can give no more :
 Yet we repine, and plenty makes us poor.
 God tried us once ; our rebel-fathers fought,
 He glutted them with all the power they
 sought :

Till mastered by their own usurping brave,
 The free-born subject sunk into a slave. 130
 We loathe our manna, and we long for
 quails ;

Ah, what is man when his own wish prevails !
 How rash, how swift to plunge himself in ill !
 Proud of his power, and boundless in his
 will !

That kings can do no wrong we must believe ;
 None can they do, and must they all receive ?
 Help, Heaven ! or sadly we shall see an hour,
 When neither wrong nor right are in their
 power !

Already they have lost their best defence,
 The benefit of laws which they dispense : 140
 No justice to their righteous cause allowed ;
 But baffled by an arbitrary crowd :
 And medals graced their conquest to record,
 The stamp and coin of their adopted lord.

The man who laughed but once* to see an
 ass
 Mumbling to make the cross-grained thistles
 pass,
 Might laugh again to see a jury chaw
 The prickles of unpalatable law.
 The witnesses, that leech-like lived on blood,
 Sucking for them were med'cinally good; 150
 But when they fastened on their festered
 sore,
 Then justice and religion they forswore;
 Their maiden oaths debauched into a whore.
 Thus men are raised by factions, and decried,
 And rogue and saint distinguished by their
 side.
 They rack even Scripture to confess their
 cause,
 And plead a call to preach in spite of laws.
 But that's no news to the poor injured page,
 It has been used as ill in every age:
 And is constrained with patience all to
 take, 160
 For what defence can Greek and Hebrew
 make?
 Happy who can this talking trumpet seize;
 They make it speak whatever sense they
 please;
 'Twas framed at first our oracle to enquire;
 But since our sects in prophecy grow higher,
 The text inspires not them, but they the
 text inspire.
 London, thou great emporium of our isle,
 O thou too bounteous, thou too fruitful Nile!
 How shall I praise or curse to thy desert?
 Or separate thy sound from thy corrupted
 part? 170
 I called thee Nile; the parallel will stand;
 Thy tides of wealth o'erflow the fattened land;
 Yet monsters from thy large increase we find,
 Engendered on the slime thou leav'st behind.
 Sedition has not wholly seized on thee,
 Thy nobler parts are from infection free.
 Of Israel's tribes thou hast a numerous band,
 But still the Canaanite is in the land.
 Thy military chiefs are brave and true;
 Nor are thy disenchanting burghers few. 180

The head is loyal which thy heart com-
 mands,
 But what's a head with two such gouty hands!
 The wise and wealthy love the surest way,
 And are content to thrive and to obey.
 But wisdom is to sloth too great a slave;
 None are so busy as the fool and knave.
 Those let me curse; what vengeance will
 they urge,
 Whose ordures neither plague nor fire can
 purge?
 Nor sharp experience can to duty bring,
 Nor angry Heaven, nor a forgiving king! 19
 In gospel phrase their chapmen they betray
 Their shops are dens, the buyer is their
 prey.
 The knack of trades is living on the spoil;
 They boast even when each other they be-
 guile.
 Customs to steal is such a trivial thing,
 That 'tis their charter to defraud their king
 All hands unite of every jarring sect;
 They cheat the country first, and then infect
 They for God's cause their monarchs dare
 dethrone,
 And they'll be sure to make His cause their
 own. 201
 Whether the plotting Jesuit laid the plan
 Of murdering kings, or the French Puritan
 Our sacrilegious sects their guides outgo,
 And kings and kingly power would murder
 too.
 What means their traitorous combination
 less?
 Too plain to evade, too shameful to confess!
 But treason is not owned when 'tis descried,
 Successful crimes alone are justified.
 The men, who no conspiracy would find,
 Who doubts, but had it taken, they had
 joined, 210
 Joined in a mutual covenant of defence,
 At first without, at last against their prince;
 If sovereign right by sovereign power they
 scan,
 The same bold maxim holds in God and man:
 God were not safe, His thunder could they
 shun,
 He should be forced to crown another son.

* M. L. CRASSUS, grandfather of the Triumvir.

Thus when the heir was from the vineyard
thrown,
The rich possession was the murderers' own.
In vain to sophistry they have recourse :
By proving theirs no plot, they prove 'tis
worse ; 220
Unmasked rebellion, and audacious force :
Which though not actual, yet all eyes may
see
'Tis working in the immediate power to be ;
For from pretended grievances they rise,
First to dislike, and after to despise.
Then Cyclop-like in human flesh to deal,
Chop up a minister at every meal :
Perhaps not wholly to melt down the king ;
But clip his regal rights within the ring :
From thence to assume the power of peace
and war, 230
And ease him by degrees of public care.
Yet to consult his dignity and fame,
He should have leave to exercise the name ;
And hold the cards while commons played
the game.
For what can power give more than food
and drink,
To live at ease, and not be bound to think ?
These are the cooler methods of their crime,
But their hot zealots think 'tis loss of time ;
On utmost bounds of loyalty they stand,
And grin and whet like a Croatian band, 240
That waits impatient for the last command.
Thus outlaws open villainy maintain,
They steal not, but in squadrons scour the
plain :
And if their power the passengers subdue,
The most have right, the wrong is in the
few.
Such impious axioms foolishly they show,
For in some soils republics will not grow :
Our temperate isle will no extremes sustain,
Of popular sway or arbitrary reign :
But slides between them both into the
best, 250
Secure in freedom, in a monarch blest :
And though the climate, vexed with various
winds,
Works through our yielding bodies on our
minds,

The wholesome tempest purges what it
breeds,
To recommend the calmness that succeeds.
But thou, the pander of the people's
hearts,
O crooked soul and serpentine in arts,
Whose blandishments a loyal land have
whored,
And broke the bond she plighted to her
lord ;
What curses on thy blasted name will
fall ! 260
Which age to age their legacy shall call,
For all must curse the woes that must de-
scend on all.
Religion thou hast none : thy mercury
Has passed through every sect, or theirs
through thee.
But what thou giv'st, that venom still re-
mains ;
And the poxed nation feels thee in their
brains.
What else inspires the tongues and swells
the breasts,
Of all thy bellowing renegado priests,
That preach up thee for God ; dispense
thy laws ;
And with thy stum ferment their fainting
cause, 270
Fresh fumes of madness raise ; and toil and
sweat
To make the formidable cripple great ?
Yet should thy crimes succeed, should law-
less power
Compass those ends thy greedy hopes devour,
Thy canting friends thy mortal foes would
be,
Thy God and theirs will never long agree ;
For thine (if thou hast any) must be one
That lets the world and humankind alone :
A jolly god, that passes hours too well
To promise heaven, or threaten us with
hell : 280
That unconcerned can at rebellion sit,
And wink at crimes he did himself commit.
A tyrant theirs ; the heaven their priest-
hood paints
A conventicle of gloomy sullen saints ;

A heaven like Bedlam, slovenly and sad ;
Foredoomed for souls, with false religion
mad.

Without a vision poets can foreshow
What all but fools by common sense may
know :

If true succession from our isle should
fail,

And crowds profane with impious arms pre-
vail, 290

Not thou, nor those thy factious arts en-
gage,

Shall reap that harvest of rebellious rage,
With which thou flatterest thy decrepit
age.

The swelling poison of the several sects,
Which, wanting vent, the nation's health
infects,

Shall burst its bag ; and fighting out their
way,

The various venoms on each other prey.

The presbyter, puffed up with spiritual
pride,

Shall on the necks of the lewd nobles ride :
His brethren damn, the civil powers defy ; 300
And parcel out republic prelacy.

But short shall be his reign : his rigid yoke
And tyrant power will puny sects provoke ;
And frogs and toads, and all their tadpole
train,

Will croak to heaven for help, from this
devouring crane.

The cut-throat sword and clamorous gown
shall jar,

In sharing their ill-gotten spoils of war :
Chiefs shall be grudged the part which they
pretend ;

Lords envy lords, and friends with every
friend

About their impious merit shall contend. 310

The surly commons shall respect deny,

And justle peerage out with property.

Their general either shall his trust betray,

And force the crowd to arbitrary sway ;

Or they, suspecting his ambitious aim,

In hate of kings shall cast anew the frame ;

And thrust out Collatine * that bore their
name.

Thus inborn broils the factions would
engage,

Or wars of exiled heirs, or foreign rage,

Till halting vengeance overtook our age : 320

And our wild labours wearied into rest,

Reclined us on a rightful monarch's breast.

" Pudet hæc opprobria, vobis
Et dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli."

* Collatinus, the husband of the Roman
Lucretia, went into exile because he was of the
family of the Tarquins, whom he had helped
to banish.

MAC FLECKNOE;
OR,
A SATIRE ON THE TRUE BLUE PROTESTANT POET,
T. S.

NOTE.

The success of "The Medal" roused the anger and jealousy of the Whig writers, and numbers of answers to it were published. Amongst them was a most scurrilous one from the pen of Thomas Shadwell, called "The Medal of John Bayes." John Bayes was the name given to Dryden in the "Rehearsal." The poet was much annoyed and pained by it, as Shadwell was a personal friend, for whose play, "A True Widow," he had written an Epilogue.

Dryden replies in this Satire, which he considered the best poem he had ever written.

"Mac Flecknoe" was published in the October, as "The Medal" was published in the March, of 1682. The name was that of a very dull Irish writer, who was dead. "Mac," of course, is "son" in Gaelic.

MAC FLECKNOE.*

ALL human things are subject to decay,
 And when fate summons, monarchs must
 obey.
 This Flecknoc found, who, like Augustus,
 young
 Was called to empire, and had governed
 long ;
 In prose and verse, was owned, without
 dispute,
 Through all the realms of Nonsense,
 absolute.
 This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
 And blessed with issue of a large increase ;
 Worn out with business, did at length
 debate
 To settle the succession of the state : 10
 And, pondering, which of all his sons was fit
 To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
 Cried, " 'Tis resolved ; for nature pleads,
 that he
 Should only rule, who most resembles me.
 Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
 Mature in dulness from his tender years :

* This is one of the best, as well as severest, satires ever produced in our language. Mr. Thomas Shadwell is the hero of the piece, and introduced, as if pitched upon, by Flecknoc, to succeed him in the throne of dulness ; for Flecknoc was never poet laureat, as has been ignorantly asserted in Cibber's "Lives of the Poets."

Richard Flecknoc, Esq., from whom this poem derives its name, was an Irish priest, who had, according to his own declaration, laid aside the mechanic part of the priesthood. He was well known at court ; yet, out of four plays which he wrote, could get only one of them acted, and that was damned.

From this poem Pope took the hint of his "Dunciad."—DERRICK.

Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he,
 Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
 The rest to some faint meaning make pre-
 tence,
 But Shadwell never deviates into sense. 20
 Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
 Strike through, and make a lucid interval ;
 But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,
 His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
 Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
 And seems designed for thoughtless majesty :
 Thoughtless as monarch oaks, that shade
 the plain,
 And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign,
 Heywood and Shirley† were but types of
 thee,
 Thou last great prophet of tautology. 30
 Ev'n I, a dunce of more renown than they,
 Was sent before but to prepare thy way,
 And, coarsely clad in Norwich druggut, came
 To teach the nations in thy greater name.
 My warbling lute, the lute I whilom strung,
 When to king John of Portugal I sung,
 Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
 When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy
 way,

† Thomas Heywood wrote more plays than any other dramatist except Lope de Vega. He had written or participated in writing 220 dramas. He lived in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. He also translated the dialogues of Lucian and Erasmus, and published a poem, "The Hierarchy of the Angels."

Shirley was a far superior poet, and ought not to be named here. He was the author of thirty-nine plays, in which are some really fine passages. Shirley and his wife died the same day, from the shock (after escaping) from the great Fire of London.

With well-timed oars before the royal barge,
Swelled with the pride of thy celestial
charge ; 40

And big with hymn, commander of an host,
The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets tossed.
Methinks I see the new Arion sail,
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
At thy well-sharpened thumb from shore to
shore

The trebles squeak for fear, the basses roar :
Echoes from Pissing-Alley Shadwell call,
And Shadwell they resound from Aston-
Hall.

About thy boat the little fishes throng,
As at the morning toast that floats along. 50
Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious
band,
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing
hand,

St. André's* feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not ev'n the feet of thy own Psyche's rhyme :
Though they in number as in sense excel ;
So just, so like tautology, they fell,
That, pale with envy, Singleton† forswore
The lute and sword, which he in triumph
bore,

And vowed he ne'er would act Villierius
more."

Here stopped the good old sire, and wept
for joy, 60

In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.

All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
That for anointed dulness he was made.

Close to the walls which fair Augusta
bind,

(The fair Augusta much to fears inclined)
An ancient fabric raised to inform the
sight,

There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight :
A watch-tower once ; but now, so fate
ordains,

Of all the pile an empty name remains :
From its old ruins brothel-houses rise, 70
Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys,

Where their vast courts the mother-
strumpets keep,

And, undisturbed by watch, in silence sleep.
Near these a nursery erects its head,
Where queens are formed, and future heroes
bred ;

Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and
cry,

Where infant punks their tender voices try,
And little Maximins the gods defy.

Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,
Nor greater Jonson dares in socks ap-
pear ; 80

But gentle Simkin just reception finds
Amidst this monument of vanished minds :
Pure clinches the suburban muse affords,
And Pantou‡ waging harmless war with
words.

Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well
known,

Ambitiously designed his Shadwell's throne.
For ancient Decker§ prophesied long since,
That in this pile should reign a mighty
prince.

Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense ;
To whom true dulness should some Psyches||
owe, 90

But worlds of Misers from his pen should
flow ;

Humorists and Hypocrites it should pro-
duce,

Whole Raymond families, and tribes of
Bruce.

Now empress Fame had published the
renown

Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.
Roused by report of fame, the nations meet,
From near Bunhill, and distant Watling-
street.

No Persian carpets spread the imperial
way,

But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay :

† *Pantou* was a famous punster.

§ *Decker* was a city poet contemporary with
Ben Jonson.

|| Shadwell had written a rhymed play, called
"*Psyche*," as well as "*The Miser*," and "*The
Humourists*."

* *St. André* was a fashionable dancing-master
of Dryden's time.

† *Singleton* was a singer ; *Villierius*, a character
in Davenant's opera, "*The Siege of Rhodes*."

From dusty shops neglected authors
come, 100

Martyrs of pies, and reliques of the bum.
Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby* there lay,
But loads of Shadwell almost choked the
way.

Bilked stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
And Herringman † was captain of the guard.
The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
High on a throne of his own labours reared.
At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
His brows thick fogs, instead of glories,
grace, 110
And lambent dulness played around his
face.

As Hannibal did to the altars come,
Sworn ‡ by his sire, a mortal foe to Rome ;
So Shadwell swore, nor should his vow be
vain,
That he till death true dulness would
maintain ;
And, in his father's right, and realm's
defence,
Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with
sense.

The king himself the sacred unction made,
As king by office, and as priest by trade.
In his sinister hand, instead of ball, 120
He placed a mighty mug of potent ale ;
" Love's Kingdom " to his right he did
convey,

At once his sceptre, and his rule of sway ;
Whose righteous lore the prince had practised young,
And from whose loins recorded Psyche
sprung.
His temples, last, with poppies were o'er-
spread,
That nodding seemed to consecrate his
head.

Just at the point of time, if fame not lie,
On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly.

* *Ogleby* translated Homer and Virgil, but badly.

† A publisher, who published at first for Dryden.

‡ Altered by Todd from *swore*.

So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tiber's brook, 120
Presage of sway from twice six vultures
took.

The admiring throng loud acclamations
make,

And omens of his future empire take.

The sire then shook the honours of his
head,

And from his brows damps of oblivion
shed

Full on the filial dulness : long he stood,
Repelling from his breast the raging god ;
At length burst out in this prophetic
mood.

" Heaven bless my son, from Ireland let
him reign

To far Barbadoes on the western main ; 140
Of his dominion may no end be known,
And greater than his father's be his throne ;
Beyond Love's Kingdom § let him stretch
his pen ! " —

He paused, and all the people cried, Amen.
Then thus continued he : " My son,
advance

Still in new impudence, new ignorance,
Success let others teach, learn thou from
me

Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
Let Virtuosos || in five years be writ ;
Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of
wit. 150

Let gentle George ¶ in triumph tread the
stage,

Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage ;
Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the
pit,

And in their folly show the writer's wit.
Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defence,

And justify their author's want of sense.

§ This is the name of that one play of Flecknoe's which was acted, but miscarried in the representation.—DERRICK.

|| Shadwell's play of the "Virtuoso," in which Sir Formal Trifle, a florid coxcombical orator, is a principal character, was first acted in 1676 ; and he tells the Duke of Newcastle, in the dedication, " that here he has endeavoured at humour, wit, and satire."—DERRICK.

¶ *Gentle George* is Sir George Etherege, a writer of comedies.

Let them be all by thy own model made
 Of dulness, and desire no foreign aid;
 That they to future ages may be known,
 Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own. 180
 Nay, let thy men of wit too be the same,
 All full of thee, and differing but in name.
 But let no alien Sedley * interpose,
 To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose. †
 And when false flowers of rhetoric thou
 would'st cull,
 Trust nature, do not labour to be dull;
 But write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
 Sir Formal's oratory will be thine:
 Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy
 quill,
 And does thy northern dedications fill. 170
 Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to
 fame,
 By arrogating Jonson's hostile name.
 Let Father Flecknoe fire thy mind with
 praise,
 And uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
 Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no
 part:
 What share have we in nature, or in art?
 Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
 And rail at arts he did not understand?
 Where made he love in prince Nicander's
 vein, ‡
 Or swept the dust in Psyche's humble
 strain? 180
 Where sold he bargains, 'whip-stitch,
 kiss my arse,'
 Promised a play, and dwindled to a farce?
 When did his muse from Fletcher scenes
 purloin,
 As thou whole Etherege dost transfuse to
 thine?
 But so transfused, as oil and waters flow,
 His always floats above, thine sinks below.
 This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
 New humours to invent for each new play:

This is that boasted bias of thy mind,
 By which one way to dulness 'tis in-
 clined: 190
 Which makes thy writings lean on one side
 still,
 And, in all changes, that way bends thy
 will.
 Nor let thy mountain-belly make pretence
 Of likeness; thine's a tympany of sense
 A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ, §
 But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin of wit.
 Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly
 creep;
 Thy tragic muse gives smiles, thy comic
 sleep.
 With what'er gall thou sett'st thyself to
 write,
 Thy inoffensive satires never bite. 200
 In thy felonious heart though venom lies,
 It does but touch thy Irish pen, and dies.
 Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
 In keen Iambics, but mild Anagram.
 Leave writing plays, and choose for thy
 command,
 Some peaceful province in Acrostic land.
 There thou may'st Wings display and
 Altars raise,
 And torture one poor word ten thousand
 ways.
 Or, if thou would'st thy different talents
 suit,
 Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy
 lute."
 He said; but his last words were scarcely
 heard: 210
 For Bruce and Longvil || had a trap pre-
 pared,
 And down they sent the yet declaiming
 bard.
 Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
 Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
 The mantle fell to the young prophet's
 part,
 With double portion of his father's art.

* Sir Charles Sedley, a poet and wit of the court of Charles II.

† He alludes to Shadwell's comedy, "Epsom Wells."

‡ A character of a lover in the opera of "Psyche."—DANIEL.

§ An allusion to Shadwell's being very stout.
 || Two very heavy characters in Shadwell's "Virtuoso."

RELIGIO LAICI;

OR,

A LAYMAN'S FAITH.

A POEM.

"Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri."

—MANILIUS, *Astronom.* iii. 39.

NOTE.

Scott says that this "is one of the most admirable poems in our language."

It is a theological poem, meant apparently to show that Dryden was a son of the Church of England: he had been born and bred, we know, as a Presbyterian. It was published in November 1682, and was soon republished, a third edition appearing in 1683.

RELIGIO LAICI;

OR,

A LAYMAN'S FAITH.

THE PREFACE.

A POEM with so bold a title, and a name prefixed from which the handling of so serious a subject would not be expected, may reasonably oblige the author to say somewhat in defence, both of himself and of his undertaking. In the first place, if it be objected to me that, being a layman, I ought not to have concerned myself with speculations which belong to the profession of divinity, I could answer that perhaps laymen, with equal advantages of parts and knowledge, are not the most incompetent judges of sacred things; but in the due sense of my own weakness and want of learning I plead not this: I pretend not to make myself a judge of faith in others, but only to make a confession of my own. I lay no unhallowed hand upon the Ark, but wait on it with the reverence that becomes me at a distance. In the next place, I will ingenuously confess that the helps I have used in this small Treatise were many of them taken from the works of our own reverend divines of the Church of England; so that the weapons with which I combat irreligion are already consecrated; though I suppose they may be taken down as lawfully as the sword of Goliath was by David, when they are to be employed for the common cause against the enemies of piety. I intend not by this to entitle them to any of my errors, which yet I hope are only those of charity to mankind; and such as my own charity has caused me to commit, that of others may more easily excuse. Being naturally inclined to scepticism in philosophy, I have no reason to impose my opinions in a subject which is above it; but, whatever they are, I submit them with all reverence to my mother Church, accounting them no further mine, than as they are authorised, or at least uncondemned by her. And, indeed, to secure myself on this side, I have used the necessary precaution of showing this paper before it was published to a judicious and learned friend, a man indefatigably zealous in the service of the Church and State; and whose writings have highly deserved of both. He was pleased to approve the body of the discourse, and I hope he is more my friend than to do it out of complaisance: it is true he had too good a taste to like it all; and, amongst some other faults, recommended to my second view, what I have written perhaps too boldly on St. Athanasius, which he advised me wholly to omit. I am sensible enough that I had done more prudently to

have followed his opinion ; but then I could not have satisfied myself that I had done honestly not to have written what was my own. It has always been my thought, that heathens who never did, nor without miracle could, hear of the name of Christ, were yet in a possibility of salvation. Neither will it enter easily into my belief, that before the coming of our Saviour the whole world, excepting only the Jewish nation, should lie under the inevitable necessity of everlasting punishment, for want of that revelation, which was confined to so small a spot of ground as that of Palestine. Among the sons of Noah we read of one only who was accursed ; and if a blessing in the ripeness of time was reserved for Japheth (of whose progeny we are), it seems unaccountable to me, why so many generations of the same offspring as preceded our Saviour in the flesh should be all involved in one common condemnation, and yet that their posterity should be entitled to the hopes of salvation : as if a bill of exclusion had passed only on the fathers, which debarred not the sons from their succession. Or that so many ages had been delivered over to hell, and so many reserved for heaven, and that the Devil had the first choice, and God the next. Truly I am apt to think that the revealed religion which was taught by Noah to all his sons might continue for some ages in the whole posterity. That afterwards it was included wholly in the family of Shem is manifest ; but when the progenies of Cham and Japheth swarmed into colonies, and those colonies were subdivided into many others, in process of time their descendants lost by little and little the primitive and purer rites of Divine worship, retaining only the notion of one deity ; to which succeeding generations added others : for men took their degrees in those ages from conquerors to gods. Revelation being thus eclipsed to almost all mankind, the light of nature as the next in dignity was substituted ; and that is it which St. Paul concludes to be the rule of the heathens, and by which they are hereafter to be judged. If my supposition be true, then the consequence which I have assumed in my poem may be also true ; namely, that Deism, or the principles of natural worship, are only the faint remnants or dying flames of revealed religion in the posterity of Noah : and that our modern philosophers, nay, and some of our philosophising divines, have too much exalted the faculties of our souls, when they have maintained that, by their force, mankind has been able to find out that there is one supreme agent or intellectual being which we call God : that praise and prayer are his due worship ; and the rest of those deducements, which I am confident are the remote effects of revelation, and unattainable by our discourse, I mean as simply considered, and without the benefit of divine illumination. So that we have not lifted up ourselves to God, by the weak pinions of our reason, but he has been pleased to descend to us ; and what Socrates said of him, what Plato writ, and the rest of the heathen philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah. That there is something above us, some principle of motion, our reason can apprehend, though it cannot discover what it is by its own virtue. And indeed 'tis very improbable, that we, who by the strength of our faculties cannot enter into the knowledge of any Being, not so much as of our own, should be able to find out, by them, that supreme nature, which we cannot otherwise define than by saying it is infinite ; as if infinite were definable, or infinity a subject for our narrow understanding. They who would prove religion by reason, do but weaken the cause which they endeavour to support ; it is to take away the pillars from our faith, and to prop it only with a twig ; it is to design a tower like that of Babel, which, if it were possible, as it is not, to reach heaven, would come to nothing by the confusion of the workmen. For every man is building a several way ; impotently conceited of his own model and his own materials : reason is always striving, and always

at a loss ; and of necessity it must so come to pass, while it is exercised about that which is not its own proper object. Let us be content at last to know God by his own methods ; at least, so much of him as he is pleased to reveal to us in the sacred Scriptures : to apprehend them to be the word of God is all our reason has to do ; for all beyond it is the work of faith, which is the seal of heaven impressed upon our human understanding.

And now for what concerns the holy bishop Athanasius, the preface of whose creed seems inconsistent with my opinion ; which is, that heathens may possibly be saved : in the first place I desire it may be considered that it is the preface only, not the creed itself which, till I am better informed, is of too hard a digestion for my charity. 'Tis not that I am ignorant how many several texts of Scripture seemingly support that cause ; but neither am I ignorant how all those texts may receive a kinder, and more mollified interpretation. Every man who is read in Church history knows that Belief was drawn up after a long contestation with Arius concerning the divinity of our blessed Saviour and His being one substance with the Father ; and that thus compiled it was sent abroad among the Christian Churches, as a kind of test, which whosoever took was looked on as an orthodox believer. It is manifest from hence, that the heathen part of the empire was not concerned in it ; for its business was not to distinguish betwixt Pagans and Christians, but betwixt Heretics and true Believers. This, well considered, takes off the heavy weight of censure, which I would willingly avoid, from so venerable a man ; for if in this proportion, " whosoever will be saved," be restrained only to those to whom it was intended, and for whom it was composed, I mean the Christians, then the anathema reaches not the Heathens, who had never heard of Christ, and were nothing interested in that dispute. After all I am far from blaming even that prefatory addition to the creed, and as far from cavilling at the continuation of it in the Liturgy of the Church, where on the days appointed it is publicly read : for I suppose there is the same reason for it now, in opposition to the Socinians, as there was then against the Arians ; the one being a Heresy, which seems to have been refined out of the other ; and with how much plausibility of reason it combats our religion, with so much more caution to be avoided : and therefore the prudence of our Church is to be commended, which has interposed her authority for the recommendation of this creed. Yet to such as are grounded in the true belief, those explanatory creeds, the Nicene and this of Athanasius, might perhaps be spared ; for what is supernatural will always be a mystery in spite of exposition, and for my own part, the plain apostles' creed is most suitable to my weak understanding, as the simplest diet is the most easy of digestion.

I have dwelt longer on this subject than I intended, and longer than perhaps I ought ; for having laid down, as my foundation, that the Scripture is a rule ; that in all things needful to salvation it is clear, sufficient, and ordained by God Almighty for that purpose, I have left myself no right to interpret obscure places, such as concern the possibility of eternal happiness to heathens ; because whatsoever is obscure is concluded not necessary to be known.

But, by asserting the Scripture to be the canon of our faith, I have unavoidably created to myself two sorts of enemies : the Papists indeed, more directly, because they have kept the Scripture from us what they could ; and have reserved to themselves a right of interpreting what they have delivered under the pretence of infallibility : and the Fanatics more collaterally, because they have assumed what amounts to an infallibility, in the private spirit, and have detorted those texts of Scripture which are not necessary to salvation to the damnable uses of sedition, disturbance, and destruction of the civil government. To begin with the Papists, and to speak freely, I think them the less

dangerous, at least in appearance, to our present state, for not only the penal laws are in force against them, and their number is contemptible; but also their peerage and commons are excluded from parliament, and consequently those laws in no probability of being repealed. A general and uninterrupted plot of their clergy, ever since the Reformation, I suppose all Protestants believe; for it is not reasonable to think but that so many of their orders, as were outed from their fat possessions, would endeavour a re-entrance against those whom they account heretics. As for the late design, Mr. Coleman's * letters, for aught I know, are the best evidence; and what they discover, without wire-drawing their sense, or malicious glosses, all men of reason conclude credible. If there be anything more than this required of me, I must believe it as well as I am able, in spite of the witnesses, and out of a decent conformity to the votes of parliament; for I suppose the Fanatics will not allow the private spirit in this case. Here the infallibility is at least in one part of the government; and our understandings as well as our wills are represented. But to return to Roman Catholics, how can we be secure from the practice of Jesuited Papists in that religion? For not two or three of that order, as some of them would impose upon us, but almost the whole body of them are of opinion, that their infallible master has a right over kings, not only in spirituals but temporals. Not to name Mariana, Bellarmine, Emanuel Sa, Molina, Santarel, Simancha, and at least twenty others of foreign countries; we can produce of our own nation, Campian, and Doleman or Parsons, besides many are named whom I have not read; who all of them attest this doctrine, that the Pope can depose and give away the right of any sovereign prince, *si vel paulum deflexerit*, if he shall never so little warp: but if he once comes to be excommunicated, then the bond of obedience is taken off from subjects; and they may and ought to drive him, like another Nebuchadnezzar, *ex hominum Christianorum dominatu*, from exercising dominion over Christians; and to this they are bound by virtue of Divine precept, and by all the ties of conscience under no less penalty than damnation. If they answer me, as a learned priest has lately written, that this doctrine of the Jesuits is not *de fide*, and that consequently they are not obliged by it, they must pardon me if I think they have said nothing to the purpose; for it is a maxim in their Church, where points of faith are not decided, and that doctors are of contrary opinions, they may follow which part they please; but more safely the most received and most authorised. And their champion Bellarmine has told the world, in his apology, that the King of England is a vassal to the Pope, *ratione directi domini*, and that he holds in villanage of his Roman landlord. Which is no new claim put in for England. Our chronicles are his authentic witnesses, that King John was deposed by the same plea, and Philip Augustus admitted tenant. And which makes the more for Bellarmine the French king was again ejected when our king submitted to the Church, and the crown received under the sordid condition of a vassalage.

It is not sufficient for the more moderate and well-meaning Papists, of which I doubt not there are many, to produce the evidences of their loyalty to the late king, and to declare their innocency in this plot: I will grant their behaviour, in the first, to have been as loyal and as brave as they desire; and will be willing to hold them excused as to the second, I mean when it comes to my turn, and after my betters; for it is a madness to be sober alone, while the nation continues drunk: but that saying of their Father Cres.† is still running in my head, that they may be dispensed with in their

* Coleman was Secretary to the Duke of York, and was the first victim of Oates's Plot.

† Cressy, the chaplain of Queen Katherine.

obedience to an heretic prince, while the necessity of the times shall oblige them to it : for that, as another of them tells us, is only the effect of Christian prudence ; but when once they shall get power to shake him off, an heretic is no lawful king, and consequently to rise against him is no rebellion. I should be glad, therefore, that they would follow the advice which was charitably given them by a reverend prelate of our Church ; namely, that they would join in a public act of disowning and detesting those Jesuitic principles, and subscribe to all doctrines which deny the Pope's authority of deposing kings, and releasing subjects from their oath of allegiance ; to which I should think they might easily be induced, if it be true that this present Pope has condemned the doctrine of king-killing, a thesis of the Jesuits, amongst others, *ex cathedra*, as they call it, or in open consistory.

Leaving them therefore in so fair a way, if they please themselves, of satisfying all reasonable men of their sincerity and good meaning to the government, I shall make bold to consider that other extreme of our religion, I mean the Fanatics, or Schismatics, of the English Church. Since the Bible has been translated into our tongue, they have used it so, as if their business was not to be saved but to be damned by its contents. If we consider only them, better had it been for the English nation that it had still remained in the original Greek and Hebrew, or at least in the honest Latin of St. Jerome, than that several texts in it should have been pervaricated to the destruction of that government which put it into so ungrateful hands.

How many heresies the first translation of Tindal produced in few years, let my lord Herbert's "History of Henry the Eighth" inform you ; insomuch, that for the gross errors in it, and the great mischiefs it occasioned, a sentence passed on the first edition of the Bible, too shameful almost to be repeated. After the short reign of Edward the Sixth, who had continued to carry on the Reformation on other principles than it was begun, every one knows that not only the chief promoters of that work, but many others, whose consciences would not dispense with Popery, were forced, for fear of persecution, to change climates ; from whence returning at the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, many of them who had been in France, and at Geneva, brought back the rigid opinions and imperious discipline of Calvin, to graft upon our Reformation. Which, though they cunningly concealed at first, as well knowing how nauseously that drug would go down in a lawful Monarchy, which was prescribed for a rebellious Commonwealth, yet they always kept it in reserve ; and were never wanting to themselves either in court or parliament, when either they had any prospect of a numerous party of fanatic members of the one, or the encouragement of any favourite in the other, whose covetousness was gaping at the patrimony of the Church. They who will consult the works of our venerable Hooker, or the account of his life, or more particularly the letter written to him on this subject by George Cranmer, may see by what gradations they proceeded ; from the dislike of cap and surplice, the very next step was admonitions to the parliament against the whole government ecclesiastical ; then came out volumes in English and Latin in defence of their tenets : and immediately practices were set on foot to erect their discipline without authority. Those not succeeding, satire and railing was the next ; and Martin Mar-prelate, the Marvel of those times, was the first Presbyterian scribbler who sanctified libels and scurrility to the use of the good old cause. Which was done, says my author, upon this account ; that their serious treatises having been fully answered and refuted, they might compass by railing what they had lost by reasoning ; and, when their cause was sunk in court and parliament, they might at least hedge in a stake amongst the rabble ; for to their ignorance all things are wit which are

abusive; but if Church and State were made the theme, then the doctoral degree of wit was to be taken at Billingsgate: even the most saintlike of the party, though they durst not excuse this contempt and vilifying of the government, yet were pleased, and grinned at it with a pious smile, and called it a judgment of God against the hierarchy. Thus sectaries, we may see, were born with teeth, foul-mouthed and scurrilous from their infancy: and if spiritual pride, venom, violence, contempt of superiors, and slander, had been the marks of orthodox belief, the presbytery and the rest of our schismatics, which are their spawn, were always the most visible Church in the Christian world.

It is true, the government was too strong at that time for a rebellion; but to show what proficiency they had made in Calvin's school, even then their mouths watered at it; for two of their gifted brotherhood, Hacket and Coppinger, as the story tells us, got up into a pease-cart, and harangued the people, to dispose them to an insurrection, and to establish their discipline by force: so that, however it comes about that now they celebrate Queen Elizabeth's birthnight, as that of their saint and patroness, yet then they were for doing the work of the Lord by arms against her; and in all probability they wanted but a fanatic lord-mayor and two sheriffs of their party to have compassed it.

Our venerable Hooker, after many admonitions which he had given them, towards the end of his preface breaks out into this prophetic speech: "There is in every one of these considerations most just cause to fear, lest our hastiness to embrace a thing of so perilous consequence" (meaning the Presbyterian discipline) "should cause posterity to feel those evils which, as yet, are more easy for us to prevent than they would be for them to remedy."

How fatally this Cassandra has foretold, we know too well by sad experience: the seeds were sown in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the bloody harvest ripened in the reign of King Charles the Martyr; and, because all the sheaves could not be carried off without shedding some of the loose grains, another crop is too likely to follow; nay, I fear it is unavoidable, if the Conventiclers be permitted still to scatter.

A man may be suffered to quote an adversary to our religion, when he speaks truth: and it is the observation of Maimbourg, in his "History of Calvinism," that wherever that discipline was planted and embraced, rebellion, civil war, and misery attended it. And how indeed should it happen otherwise? Reformation of Church and State has always been the ground of our divisions in England. While we were Papists, our holy Father rid us by pretending authority out of the Scriptures to depose princes; when we shook off his authority, the sectaries furnished themselves with the same weapons, and out of the same magazine, the Bible: so that the Scriptures, which are in themselves the greatest security of governors, as commanding express obedience to them, are now turned to their destruction; and never since the Reformation has there wanted a text of their interpreting to authorise a rebel. And it is to be noted by the way, that the doctrines of king-killing and deposing, which have been taken up only by the worst party of the Papists, the most frontless flatterers of the Pope's authority, have been espoused, defended, and are still maintained by the whole body of Nonconformists and Republicans. It is but dubbing themselves the people of God, which it is the interest of their preachers to tell them they are, and their own interest to believe; and after that, they cannot dip into the Bible, but one text or other will turn up for their purpose: if they are under persecution, as they call it, then that is a mark of their election; if they flourish, then God works miracles for their deliverance, and the saints are to possess the earth.

They may think themselves to be too roughly handled in this paper ; but I, who know best how far I could have gone on this subject, must be bold to tell them they are spared : though at the same time I am not ignorant that they interpret the mildness of a writer to them, as they do the mercy of the government ; in the one they think it fear, and conclude it weakness in the other. The best way for them to confute me is, as I before advised the Papists, to disclaim their principles and renounce their practices. We shall all be glad to think them true Englishmen when they obey the King, and true Protestants when they conform to the Church discipline.

It remains that I acquaint the reader, that these verses were written for an ingenious young gentleman, my friend, upon his translation of "The Critical History of the Old Testament," composed by the learned father Simon : the verses therefore are addressed to the translator of that work, and the style of them is, what it ought to be, epistolary.

If any one be so lamentable a critic as to require the smoothness, the numbers, and the turn of heroic poetry in this poem, I must tell him, that, if he has not read Horace, I have studied him, and hope the style of his epistles is not ill imitated here. The expressions of a poem designed purely for instruction ought to be plain and natural, and yet majestic ; for here the poem is presumed to be a kind of lawgiver, and those three qualities which I have named are proper to the legislative style. The florid, elevated, and figurative way is for the passions ; for love and hatred, fear and anger, are begotten in the soul, by showing their objects out of their true proportion, either greater than the life or less ; but instruction is to be given by showing them what they naturally are. A man is to be cheated into passion, but to be reasoned into truth.

RELIGIO LAICI.

DIM as the borrowed beams of moon and stars

To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
Is Reason to the soul : and as on high,
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here : so Reason's glimmering ray

Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as those nightly tapers disappear,
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere ;

So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight, 10
So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light.

Some few, whose lamp shone brighter, have been led

From cause to cause, to nature's secret head ;

And found that one first principle must be :
But what, or who, that UNIVERSAL HE—
Whether some soul encompassing this ball,
Unmade, unmoved ; yet making, moving all ;

Or various atoms' interfering dance
Leaped into form, the noble work of chance ;
Or this great all was from eternity ; 20

Not even the Stagirite himself could see ;
And Epicurus guessed as well as he :
As blindly groped they for a future state ;
As rashly judged of providence and fate :
But least of all could their endeavours find *
What most concerned the good of human kind :

* Opinions of the several sects of philosophers concerning the *summum bonum*.—Marginal note by Dryden.

For happiness was never to be found ;
But vanished from them like enchanted ground.

One thought Content the good to be enjoyed :
This every little accident destroyed : 30

The wiser madmen did for Virtue toil,
A thorny, or at best a barren soil :
In Pleasure some their glutton souls would steep,

But found their line too short, the well too deep ;

And leaky vessels which no bliss could keep.
Thus anxious thoughts in endless circles roll,

Without a centre where to fix the soul :
In this wild maze their vain endeavours end :
How can the less the greater comprehend ?
Or finite reason reach Infinity ? 40

For what could fathom God were more than He.

The Deist thinks he stands on firmer ground ; †

Cries *εὐπεκα*, the mighty secret's found :
God is that spring of good ; supreme, and best ;

We made to serve, and in that service blest ;

If so, some rules of worship must be given,
Distributed alike to all by Heaven :
Else God were partial, and to some denied
The means His justice should for all provide.
This general worship is to PRAISE and

PRAY : 50
One part to borrow blessings, one to pay :

† A system of Deism.—Original marginal note by Dryden.

And when frail nature slides into offence,
The sacrifice for crimes is penitence.
Yet since the effects of Providence, we find,
Are variously dispensed to human kind ;
That vice triumphs, and virtue suffers here,
A brand that sovereign justice cannot bear ;
Our reason prompts us to a future state :
The last appeal from fortune and from fate :
Where God's all-righteous ways will be
declared ; 60

The bad meet punishment, the good reward.

Thus man by his own strength to heaven
would soar : *

And would not be obliged to God for more.
Vain, wretched creature, how art thou
misled

To think thy wit these god-like notions
bred !

These truths are not the product of thy
mind,

But dropt from heaven, and of a nobler kind.
Revealed Religion first informed thy sight,
And Reason saw not, till Faith sprung the
light.

Hence all thy natural worship takes the
source : 70

'Tis revelation what thou think'st discourse.
Else how comest thou to see these truths
so clear,

Which so obscure to Heathens did appear ?

Not Plato these, nor Aristotle found :

Nor he whose wisdom oracles renowned. †

Hast thou a wit so deep, or so sublime,

Or canst thou lower dive, or higher climb ?

Canst thou by reason more of Godhead
know

Than Plutarch, Seneca, or Cicero ?

Those giant wits in happier ages born, 80
(When arms and arts did Greece and Rome
adorn,)

Knew no such system : no such piles could
raise

Of natural worship, built on prayer and
praise

To one sole God.

Nor did remorse to expiate sin pre-
scribe,

But slew their fellow-creatures for a bribe :
The guiltless victim groaned for their
offence ;

And cruelty and blood was penitence.

If sheep and oxen could atone for men,

Ah ! at how cheap a rate the rich might
sin ; 90

And great oppressors might Heaven's wrath
beguile,

By offering His own creatures for a spoil !

Dar'st thou, poor worm, offend Infinity ?

And must the terms of peace be given by
thee ?

Then thou art Justice in the last appeal ;

Thy easy God instructs thee to rebel :

And, like a king remote, and weak, must
take

What satisfaction thou art pleased to make.

But if there be a power too just and strong,

To wink at crimes, and bear unpunished
wrong, 100

Look humbly upward, see His will dis-
close

The forfeit first, and then the fine impose :

A mulct thy poverty could never pay,

Had not Eternal Wisdom found the way,

And with celestial wealth supplied thy
store :

His justice makes the fine, His mercy quits
the score.

See God descending in thy human frame ;

The offended suffering in the offender's
name ;

All thy misdeeds to Him imputed see,

And all His righteousness devolved on
thee. 110

For granting we have sinned, and that
the offence

Of man is made against Omnipotence,
Some price that bears proportion must be
paid ;

And infinite with infinite be weighed.

See then the Deist lost : remorse for vice,

Not paid ; or paid, inadequate in price :

What farther means can Reason now direct,

Or what relief from human wit expect ?
I

* Of revealed religion.—Original marginal
note by Dryden.

† Socrates.—Marginal Note, orig. edit.

That shows us sick ; and sadly are we sure
Still to be sick, till Heaven reveal the
cure : 130

If then Heaven's will must needs be understood,

(Which must, if we want cure, and Heaven
be good,)

Let all records of will revealed be shown ;
With Scripture all in equal balance thrown,
And our one Sacred Book will be that one.

Proof needs not here, for whether we
compare

That impious, idle, superstitious ware
Of rites, lustrations, offerings, (which be-
fore,

In various ages, various countries bore,)

With Christian faith and virtues, we shall
find 130

None answering the great ends of human
kind,

But this one rule of life, that shows us best
How God may be appeased, and mortals
blest.

Whether from length of time its worth we
draw,

The world is scarce more ancient than the
law :

Heaven's early care prescribed for every
age ;

First, in the soul ; and after, in the page.

Or, whether more abstractedly we look,
Or on the writers, or the written book,

Whence but from Heaven, could men un-
skilled in arts, 140

In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths ? or how, or
why,

Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie ?

Unasked their pains, ungrateful their
advice,

Starving their gain, and martyrdom their
price.

If on the Book itself we cast our view,
Concurrent heathens prove the story true :
The doctrine, miracles ; which must con-
vince,

For Heaven in them appeals to human
sense :

And though they prove not, they confirm
the cause, 150

When what is taught agrees with nature's
laws.

Then for the style, majestic and divine,
It speaks no less than God in every line :
Commanding words, whose force is still
the same

As the first fiat that produced our frame.
All faiths beside, or did by arms ascend,
Or sense indulged has made mankind their
friend :

This only doctrine does our lusts oppose,
Unfed by nature's soil, in which it grows ;
Cross to our interests, curbing sense and
sin ; 160

Oppressed without, and undermined within,
It thrives through pain ; its own tormentors
tires ;

And with a stubborn patience still aspires.
To what can Reason such effects assign
Transcending nature, but to laws divine ?

Which in that Sacred Volume are contained ;
Sufficient, clear, and for that use ordained.

But stay : the Deist here will urge anew,*
No supernatural worship can be true :

Because a general law is that alone 170
Which must to all, and everywhere, be
known :

A style so large as not this Book can claim,
Nor aught that bears revealed religion's
name.

'Tis said the sound of a Messiah's birth
Is gone through all the habitable earth,

But still that text must be confined alone
To what was then inhabited and known :
And what provision could from thence
accrue

To Indian souls, and worlds discovered
new ?

In other parts it helps, that, ages past, 180
The Scriptures there were known, and were
embraced,

Till Sin spread once again the shades of
night :

What's that to these who never saw the light ?

* Objection of the Deist.—M. N. Orig. edit.

Of all objections this indeed is chief *
 To startle reason, stagger frail belief :
 We grant, 'tis true, that Heaven from
 human sense
 Has hid the secret paths of Providence :
 But boundless wisdom, boundless mercy,
 may
 Find even for those bewildered souls a way :
 If from His nature foes may pity claim, 190
 Much more may strangers who ne'er heard
 His name.
 And though no name be for salvation
 known,
 But that of His Eternal Son's alone ;
 Who knows how far transcending goodness
 can
 Extend the merits of that Son to man ?
 Who knows what reasons may His mercy
 lead,
 Or ignorance invincible may plead ?
 Not only charity bids hope the best,
 But more the great apostle has expressed :
 That if the Gentiles, whom no law in-
 spired, 200
 By nature did what was by law required ;
 They, who the written rule had never known,
 Were to themselves both rule and law alone :
 To nature's plain indictment they shall
 plead ;
 And by their conscience be condemned or
 freed.
 Most righteous doom ! because a rule re-
 vealed
 Is none to those from whom it was con-
 cealed.
 Then those who followed Reason's dictates
 right,
 Lived up, and lifted high their natural light,
 With Socrates may see their Maker's
 face, 210
 While thousand rubric-martyrs want a
 place.
 Nor does it balk my charity, to find
 The Egyptian bishop † of another mind :

For though his creed eternal truth contains,
 'Tis hard for man to doom to endless pains
 All who believed not all his zeal required ;
 Unless he first could prove he was inspired.
 Then let us either think he meant to say
 This faith, where published, was the only
 way ;
 Or else conclude, that, Arius to confute, 220
 The good old man, too eager in dispute,
 Flew high ; and, as his Christian fury rose,
 Damned all for heretics who durst oppose.
 Thus far my charity this path has tried ; ‡
 (A much unskilful, but well-meaning
 guide :)
 Yet what they are, ev'n these crude thoughts
 were bred
 By reading that which better thou hast read :
 Thy matchless author's work § which thou,
 my friend,
 By well translating better dost commend :
 Those youthful hours which, of thy equals
 most 230
 In toys havesquandered, or in vice have lost,
 Those hours hast thou to nobler use em-
 ployed ;
 And the severe delights of truth enjoyed.
 Witness this weighty book, in which appears
 The crabb'd toil of many thoughtful years,
 Spent by thy author, in the sifting care
 Of Rabbins' old sophisticated ware
 From gold divine ; which he who well can
 sort
 May afterwards make algebra a sport.

modern critics ascribe it to a Latin writer, Vigilius, Bishop of Tapsus, in Africa ; and it is not to be found in almost any manuscript of Athanasius's works ; and the style is more like a Latin than a Greek writer ; nor does St. Cyril, of Alexandria, nor the Council of Ephesus, ever urge it, or make mention of it in the arguments used against the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches. The famous book of Servetus, "De Trinitatis Erroribus," is in a vile obscure style. Libri 7. per Mich. Servetum, alias Reves ab Arragone Hispanum, 1531.—Dr. J. WARTON.

† Digression to the translator of Father Simon's "Critical History of the Old Testament."—M. N. Orig. edit.

§ Père Richard Simon's "Critical History of the Old Testament," translated by a friend of Dryden. Dr. Warton thought it a mischievous and even infidel work.

* The objection answered.—M. N. Orig. edit.
 † *The Egyptian bishop* (Baronius, Bona, Belarmine, and Rivet, think Athanasius wrote the creed that goes under his name ; but many

A treasure, which if country curates
buy, 260

They Junius and Tremellius may defy :

Save pains in various readings and trans-
lations,

And without Hebrew make most learned
quotations.

A work so full with various learning fraught,
So nicely pondered, yet so strongly wrought,
As Nature's height and Art's last hand
required :

As much as man could compass, uninspired.
Where we may see what errors have been
made

Both in the copiers' and translators' trade :
How Jewish, Popish, interests have pre-
vailed, 260

And where infallibility has failed.

For some, who have his secret meaning
guessed,

Have found our author not too much a
priest :

For fashion-sake he seems to have recourse
To Pope, and Councils, and Tradition's
force :

But he that old traditions could subdue,
Could not but find the weakness of the new ;
If Scripture, though derived from heavenly
birth,

Has been but carelessly preserved on earth ;
If God's own people, who of God before 260
Knew what we know, and had been pro-
mised more,

In fuller terms, of Heaven's assisting care,
And who did neither time nor study spare
To keep this Book untainted, unperplexed,
Let in gross errors to corrupt the text,
Omitted paragraphs, embroiled the sense,
With vain traditions stopped the gaping
fence,

Which every common hand pulled up with
ease,

What safety from such brushwood-helps as
these?

If written words from time are not
secured, 270

How can we think have oral sounds en-
dured?

Which thus transmitted, if one mouth has
failed,

Immortal lies on ages are entailed :

And that some such have been, is proved
too plain ;

If we consider Interest, Church, and Gain.

Oh, but, says one, Tradition set aside,*

Where can we hope for an unerring guide?
For since the original Scripture has been
lost,

All copies disagreeing, maimed the most,
Or Christian faith can have no certain
ground, 280

Or truth in Church Tradition must be
found.

Such an omniscient Church we wish
indeed ;

'Twere worth both Testaments, and cast
in the Creed :

But if this mother be a guide so sure,
As can all doubts resolve, all truth secure,
Then her infallibility, as well,

Where copies are corrupt or lame, can tell ;
Restore lost canon with as little pains,
As truly explicate what still remains :

Which yet no Council dare pretend to
do, 280

Unless like Esdras they could write it new :
Strange confidence, still to interpret true,
Yet not be sure that all they have explained,
Is in the best original contained.

More safe, and much more modest 'tis,
to say

God would not leave mankind without a
way :

And that the Scriptures, though not every
where

Free from corruption, or entire, or clear,
Are uncorrupt, sufficient, clear, entire,

In all things which our needful faith
require. 290

If others in the same glass better see,
'Tis for themselves they look, but not for
me :

For *my* salvation must its doom receive,
Not from what *others* but what *I* believe.

* Of the infallibility of tradition in general.—
M. N. Orig. edit.

Must all tradition then be set aside ? *
 This to affirm were ignorance or pride.
 Are there not many points, some needful
 sure
 To saving faith, that Scripture leaves
 obscure ?
 Which every sect will wrest a several way,
 (For what one sect interprets, all sects
 may :) 310
 We hold, and say we prove from Scripture
 plain,
 That Christ is GOD ; the bold Socinian
 From the same Scripture urges he's but *man*.
 Now what appeal can end the important
 suit ?
 Both parts talk loudly, but the rule is mute.
 Shall I speak plain, and in a nation free
 Assume an honest layman's liberty ?
 I think, (according to my little skill,
 To my own mother-church submitting still)
 That many have been saved, and many
 may, 320
 Who never heard this question brought in
 play.
 The unlettered Christian, who believes in
 gross,
 Plods on to Heaven, and ne'er is at a loss :
 For the strait-gate would be made straiter
 yet,
 Were none admitted there but men of wit.
 The few by nature formed, with learning
 fraught,
 Born to instruct, as others to be taught,
 Must study well the sacred page ; and see
 Which doctrine, this, or that, does best
 agree
 With the whole tenor of the work divine : 330
 And plainliest points to Heaven's revealed
 design :
 Which exposition flows from genuine sense ;
 And which is forced by wit and eloquence.
 Not that tradition's parts are useless here :
 When general, old, disinterested and clear :
 That ancient Fathers thus expound the
 page,
 Gives truth the reverend majesty of age :

* Objection in behalf of tradition urged by
 Father Simon.—M. N. Orig. edit.

Confirms its force, by biding every test ;
 For best authorities, next rules are best.
 And still the nearer to the spring we go, 340
 More limpid, more unsoiled the waters
 flow.
 Thus, first traditions were a proof alone ;
 Could we be certain such they were, so
 known :
 But since some flaws in long descent may be,
 They make not truth but probability.
 Even Arius and Pelagius durst provoke
 To what the centuries preceding spoke.
 Such difference is there in an oft-told tale :
 But truth by its own sinews will prevail.
 Tradition written therefore more com-
 mends 350
 Authority, than what from voice descends :
 And this, as perfect as its kind can be,
 Rolls down to us the sacred history :
 Which from the Universal Church received,
 Is tried, and after, for itself believed.
 The partial Papists would infer from
 hence †
 Their Church, in last resort, should judge
 the sense.
 But first they would assume, with wond'rous
 art, ‡
 Themselves to be the whole, who are but
 part
 Of that vast frame, the Church ; yet grant
 they were 360
 The handers down, can they from thence
 infer
 A right to interpret ? or would they alone,
 Who brought the present, claim it for their
 own ?
 The Book's a common largess to mankind ;
 Not more for them than every man designed ;
 The welcome news is in the letter found ;
 The carrier's not commissioned to expound.
 It speaks itself, and what it does contain,
 In all things needful to be known, is plain.
 In times o'ergrown with rust and ignor-
 ance, 370
 A gainful trade their clergy did advance :

† The second objection.—M. N. Orig. edit.

‡ Answer to the objection.—M. N. Orig. edit.

When want of learning kept the laymen low,
And none but priests were authorised to
know :

When what small knowledge was, in them
did dwell,

And he a god who could but read or
spell ;

Then mother Church did mightily prevail ;
She parcelled out the Bible by retail :

But still expounded what she sold or gave,
To keep it in her power to damn and save.
Scripture was scarce, and as the market
went, 380

Poor laymen took salvation on content ;
As needy men take money good or bad :
God's word they had not, but the priest's
they had.

Yet, whate'er false conveyances they made,
The lawyer still was certain to be paid.

In those dark times they learned their knack
so well,

That by long use they grew infallible.

At last, a knowing age began to inquire
If they the Book, or that did them inspire :
And, making narrower search, they found,
though late, 390

That what they thought the priest's, was
their estate ;

Taught by the will produced, (the written
word,)

How long they had been cheated on record.
Then, every man who saw the title fair
Claimed a child's part, and put in for a
share :

Consulted soberly his private good,
And saved himself as cheap as e'er he
could.

"Tis true, my friend, (and far be flattery
hence,)

This good had full as bad a consequence :
The Book thus put in every vulgar hand, 400
Which each presumed he best could under-
stand,

The common rule was made the common
prey ;

And at the mercy of the rabble lay.
The tender page with horny fists was galled ;
And he was gifted most that loudest bawled :

The spirit gave the doctoral degree :
And every member of a company
Was of his trade, and of the Bible, free.

Plain truths enough for needful use they
found :

But men would still be itching to ex-
pound : 410

Each was ambitious of the obscurest place,
No measure ta'en from knowledge, all from
grace.

Study and pains were now no more their
care ;

Texts were explained by fasting and by
prayer :

This was the fruit the private spirit brought :
Occasioned by great zeal and little thought.
While crowds unlearned, with rude devotion
warm,

About the sacred viands buzz and swarm,
The fly-blown text creates a crawling
brood ;

And turns to maggots what was meant for
food. 420

A thousand daily sects rise up and die ;
A thousand more the perished race supply :
So all we make of Heaven's discovered
will,

Is, not to have it, or to use it ill.

The danger's much the same ; on several
shelves

If others wreck us, or we wreck ourselves.

What then remains, but, waiving each
extreme,

The tides of ignorance and pride to stem ?
Neither so rich a treasure to forego
Nor proudly seek beyond our power to
know ? 430

Faith is not built on disquisitions vain ;
The things we must believe are few and
plain :

But since men will believe more than they
need,

And every man will make himself a creed,
In doubtful questions 'tis the safest way
To learn what unsuspected ancients say :
For 'tis not likely we should higher soar
In search of Heaven, than all the Church
before :

Nor can we be deceived, unless we see
 The Scripture and the Fathers disagree. 440
 If after all they stand suspected still,
 (For no man's faith depends upon his
 will;)

'Tis some relief, that points not clearly
 known,
 Without much hazard may be let alone :
 And after hearing what our Church can
 say,
 If still our reason runs another way,

That private reason 'tis more just to curb,
 Than by disputes the public peace disturb,
 For points obscure are of small use to learn :
 But common quiet is mankind's concern. 450
 Thus have I made my own opinions clear ;
 Yet neither praise expect nor censure fear !
 And this unpolished rugged verse I chose,
 As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose :
 For while from sacred truth I do not swerve,
 Tom Sternhold's, or Tom Shadwell's rhymes
 will serve.

THRENODIA AUGUSTALIS:

A FUNERAL PINDARIC POEM.

SACRED TO THE HAPPY MEMORY OF KING CHARLES II.

I.

THUS long my grief has kept me dumb :
Sure there's a lethargy in mighty woe,
Tears stand congealed, and cannot flow ;
And the sad soul retires into her inmost
room :
Tears, for a stroke foreseen, afford relief ;
But, unprovided for a sudden blow,
Like Niobe we marble grow ;
And petrify with grief.

Our British heaven was all serene,
No threatening cloud was nigh, 10
Not the least wrinkle to deform the sky ;
We lived as unconcerned and happily
As the first age in nature's golden scene ;
Supine amidst our flowing store,
We slept securely, and we dreamt of more :
When suddenly the thunder-clap was
heard,
It took us unprepared and out of guard,
Already lost before we feared.
The amazing news of Charles at once were
spread,
At once the general voice declared, 20
" Our gracious prince was dead."
No sickness known before, no slow
disease,
To soften grief by just degrees :
But like an hurricane on Indian seas,
The tempest rose ;
An unexpected burst of woes ;
 re a breathing space betwixt,
This now becalmed, and perishing the next.

As if great Atlas from his height
Should sink beneath his heavenly weight, 30
And with a mighty flaw, the flaming wall
 (As once it shall,)
Should gape immense, and rushing down,
o'erwhelm this nether ball ;
So swift and so surprising was our fear :
Out Atlas fell indeed ; but Hercules was
near.*

II.

His pious brother, sure the best
Who ever bore that name,
Was newly risen from his rest,
And, with a fervent flame,
His usual morning vows had just ad-
dressed 40
For his dear sovereign's health ;
And hoped to have them heard,
In long increase of years,
In honour, fame, and wealth :
Guiltless of greatness thus he always
prayed,
Nor knew nor wished those vows he made
On his own head should be repaid.
Soon as the ill-omened rumour reached his
ear,
(Ill news is winged with fate, and flies
apace,)
Who can describe the amazement of his
face ! 50

* An allusion to the fable of Hercules sup-
porting the heavens when Atlas was fatigued.
—SCOTT.

Horror in all his pomp was there,
Mute and magnificent without a tear :
And then the hero first was seen to fear.
Half unarm'd he ran to his relief,
So hasty and so artless was his grief :
Approaching greatness met him with her
charms

Of power and future state ;
But looked so ghastly in a brother's fate,
He shook her from his arms.
Arrived within the mournful room, he saw 80
A wild distraction, void of awe,
And arbitrary grief, unbounded by a law.
God's image, God's anointed lay
Without motion, pulse, or breath,
A senseless lump of sacred clay,
An image now of death.

Amidst his sad attendants' groans and cries,
The lines of that adored forgiving face,
Distorted from their native grace ;
An iron slumber sat on his majestic eyes. 70
The pious duke—Forbear, audacious Muse,
No terms thy feeble art can use
Are able to adorn so vast a woe :
The grief of all the rest like subject-grief
did show,
His like a sovereign did transcend ;
No wife, no brother, such a grief could
know,
Nor any name but friend.

III.

O wondrous changes of a fatal scene,
Still varying to the last !
Heaven, though its hard decree was
past, 80
Seemed pointing to a gracious turn again :
And Death's uplifted arm arrested in its
haste.
Heaven half repented of the doom,
And almost grieved it had foreseen,
What by foresight it willed eternally to
come.
Mercy above did hourly plead
For her resemblance here below ;
And mild forgiveness intercede
To stop the coming blow.

New miracles approached the ethereal
throne, 90

Such as his wondrous life had often lately
known,

And urged that still they might be shown.
On earth his pious brother prayed and
vowed,

Renouncing greatness at so dear a rate,
Himself defending what he could,
From all the glories of his future fate.
With him the innumerable crowd,
Of arm'd prayers

Knocked at the gates of heaven, and
knocked aloud ;

The first well-meaning rude petitioners. 100
All for his life assailed the throne,
All would have bribed the skies by offering
up their own.

So great a throng not heaven itself could
bar ;

'Twas almost borne by force as in the
giants' war.

The prayers, at least, for his reprieve were
heard ;

His death, like Hezekiah's, was deferred :
Against the sun the shadow went ;
Five days, those five degrees, were lent
To form our patience and prepare the
event.

The second causes took the swift com-
mand, 110

The medicinal head, the ready hand,
All eager to perform their part ;
All but eternal doom was conquered by
their art :

Once more the fleeting soul came back,
To inspire the mortal frame ;
And in the body took a doubtful stand,
Doubtful and hovering like expiring flame,
That mounts and falls by turns, and
trembles o'er the brand.

IV.

The joyful short-lived news soon spread
around,
Took the same train, the same impetuous
bound : 120

The drooping town in smiles again was
dressed,

Gladness in every face expressed,
Their eyes before their tongues confessed.

Men met each other with erected look,
The steps were higher that they took;
Each to congratulate his friend made
haste,

And long inveterate foes saluted as they
passed :

Above the rest heroic James appeared
Exalted more because he more had feared :
His manly heart, whose noble pride 130
Was still above

Dissembled hate or varnished love,
Its more than common transport could not
hide ;

But like an eagle* rode in triumph o'er
the tide.

Thus in alternate course,
The tyrant passions, hope and fear,
Did in extremes appear,
And flashed upon the soul with equal
force.

Thus, at half ebb, a rolling sea
Returns and wins upon the shore ; 140

The watery herd, affrighted at the roar,
Rest on their fins awhile, and stay,
Then backward take their wondering way :
The prophet wonders more than they,
At prodigies but rarely seen before,
And cries, a king must fall, or kingdoms
change their way.

Such were our counter-tides at land, and
so

Presaging of the fatal blow,
In their prodigious ebb and flow.
The royal soul, that, like the labouring
moon, 150

By charms of art was hurried down,
Forced with regret to leave her native
sphere,

Came but awhile on liking here :
Soon weary of the painful strife,
And made but faint essays of life :

* An *eagle* is a tide swelling above another tide,
which I myself observed on the river Trent.—
Dryden, Marg. Note, orig. edit.

An evening light
Soon shut in night ;
A strong distemper, and a weak relief,
Short intervals of joy, and long returns of
grief.

v.

The sons of art all medicines tried, 160
And every noble remedy applied ;
With emulation each essayed

His utmost skill, nay more, they prayed :
Never was losing game with better conduct
played.

Death never won a stake with greater toil,
Nor e'er was fate so near a foil :

But like a fortress on a rock,
The impregnable disease their vain attempts
did mock ;

They mined it near, they battered from
afar

With all the cannon of the medicinal
war ; 170

No gentle means could be essayed,
'Twas beyond parley when the siege was
laid :

The extremest ways they first ordain,
Prescribing such intolerable pain,
As none but Cæsar could sustain :
Undaunted Cæsar underwent
The malice of their art, nor bent
Beneath whate'er their pious rigour could
invent :

In five such days he suffered more
Than any suffered in his reign before ; 180
More, infinitely more, than he,
Against the worst of rebels, could decree,
A traitor, or twice pardoned enemy.
Now art was tired without success,
No racks could make the stubborn malady
confess.

The vain insurancers of life,
And he who most performed and promised
less,
Even Short himself forsook the unequal
strife.

Death and despair was in their looks,
No longer they consult their memories or
books ; 190

Like helpless friends, who view from shore
The labouring ship, and hear the tempest
roar ;

So stood they with their arms across ;
Not to assist but to deplore
The inevitable loss.

VI.

Death was denounced ; that frightful sound
Which even the best can hardly bear,
He took the summons void of fear ;
And unconcernedly cast his eyes around ;
As if to find and dare the grisly chal-
lenger. 200

What death could do he lately tried,
When in four days he more than died.
The same assurance all his words did grace ;
The same majestic mildness held its place :
Nor lost the monarch in his dying face.
Intrepid, pious, merciful, and brave,
He looked as when he conquered and
forgave.

VII.

As if some angel had been sent
To lengthen out his government,
And to foretell as many years again, 210
As he had numbered in his happy reign,
So cheerfully he took the doom
Of his departing breath ;
Nor shrunk nor stept aside for death ;
But with unaltered pace kept on ;
Providing for events to come,
When he resigned the throne.
Still he maintained his kingly state ;
And grew familiar with his fate.
Kind, good, and gracious, to the last, 220
On all he loved before his dying beams he
cast :

Oh, truly good, and truly great,
For glorious as he rose, benignly so he set !
All that on earth he held most dear,
He recommended to his care,
To whom both Heaven
The right had given,
And his own love bequeathed supreme
command :
He took and pressed that ever loyal hand,

Which could in peace secure his reign, 230
Which could in wars his power maintain,
That hand on which no plighted vows were
ever vain.

Well for so great a trust he chose
A prince who never disobeyed :
Not when the most severe commands were
laid ;
Nor want, nor exile with his duty weighed :
A prince on whom, if Heaven its eyes could
close,
The welfare of the world it safely might
repose.

VIII.

That king who lived to God's own heart,
Yet less serenely died than he : 240
Charles left behind no harsh decree
For schoolmen with laborious art
To salve from cruelty :
Those, for whom love could no excuses
frame,
He graciously forgot to name.
Thus far my muse, though rudely, has
designed
Some faint resemblance of his godlike
mind :
But neither pen nor pencil can express
The parting brothers' tenderness :
Though that's a term too mean and low ; 250
The blest above a kinder word may know :
But what they did, and what they said,
The monarch who triumphant went,
The militant who stayed,
Like painters when their height'ning arts
are spent,
I cast into a shade.
That all-forgiving king,
The type of Him above,
That inexhausted spring
Of clemency and love ; 260
Himself to his next self accused,
And asked that pardon which he ne'er
refused :
For faults not his, for guilt and crimes
Of godless men, and of rebellious times :
For an hard exile, kindly meant,
When his ungrateful country sent

Their best Camillus into banishment :
And forced their sovereign's act, they could
not his consent.

Oh, how much rather had that injured chief
Repeated all his sufferings past ! 270
Than hear a pardon begged at last,
Which given could give the dying no relief :
He bent, he sunk beneath his grief :
His dauntless heart would fain have held
From weeping, but his eyes rebelled.
Perhaps the godlike hero in his breast
Disdained, or was ashamed, to show
So weak, so womanish a woe,
Which yet the brother and the friend so
plenteously confessed.

IX.

Amidst that silent shower, the royal mind 280
An easy passage found,
And left its sacred earth behind :
Nor murmuring groan expressed, nor
labouring sound,
Nor any least tumultuous breath ;
Calm was his life, and quiet was his death.
Soft as those gentle whispers were,
In which the Almighty did appear ;
By the still voice the prophet knew Him
there.*
That peace which made thy prosperous
reign to shine,
That peace thou leav'st to thy imperial
line, 290
That peace, oh happy shade, be ever thine !

X.

For all those joys thy restoration brought,
For all the miracles it wrought,
For all the healing balm † thy mercy poured
Into the nation's bleeding wound,
And care that after kept it sound,

* 1 Kings xix. 12, "And after the fire a *still* small voice." See also the marginal reading of Job iv. 16, "I heard a *still* voice, saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God?"

† King Charles's first Parliament, from passing the Act of Indemnity, was called the Healing Parliament.—SCOTT.

For numerous blessings yearly showered,
And property with plenty crowned ;
For freedom, still maintained alive,
Freedom, which in no other land will
thrive, 300
Freedom, an English subject's sole pre-
rogative,
Without whose charms even peace would
be
But a dull quiet slavery :
For these and more, accept our pious
praise ;
'Tis all the subsidy
The present age can raise,
The rest is charged on late posterity.
Posterity is charged the more,
Because the large abounding store
To them and to their heirs is still entailed
by thee, 310

Succession of a long descent
Which chastely in the channels ran,
And from our demi-gods began,
Equal almost to time in its extent,
Through hazards numberless and great,
Thou hast derived this mighty blessing
down,
And fixed the fairest gem that decks the
imperial crown :
Not faction, when it shook thy regal seat,
Not senates, insolently loud,
Those echoes of a thoughtless crowd, 320
Not foreign or domestic treachery,
Could warp thy soul to their unjust decree.
So much thy foes thy manly mind mistook,
Who judged it by the mildness of thy look :
Like a well tempered sword it bent at will ;
But kept the native toughness of the steel.

XI.

Be true, O Clio, to thy hero's name !
But draw him strictly so,
That all who view the piece may know ;
He needs no trappings of fictitious fame : 330
The load's too weighty : thou mayest choose
Some parts of praise, and some refuse ;
Write, that his annals may be thought
more lavish than the Muse.

In scanty truth thou hast confined
The virtues of a royal mind,
Forgiving, bounteous, humble, just, and
kind :

His conversation, wit, and parts,
His knowledge in the noblest useful arts,
Were such, dead authors could not give ;
But habitudes of those who live ; 340
Who, lighting him, did greater lights re-
ceive :

He drained from all, and all they knew ;
His apprehension quick, his judgment true :
That the most learned, with shame, confess
His knowledge more, his reading only less.

XII.

Amidst the peaceful triumphs of his reign,
What wonder if the kindly beams he shed
Revived the drooping arts again,
If Science raised her head,
And soft Humanity that from rebellion
fled : 350

Our isle, indeed, too fruitful was before ;
But all uncultivated lay
Out of the solar walk and heaven's high
way ;

With rank Geneva weeds run o'er,
And cockle, at the best, amidst the corn it
bore :

The royal husbandman appeared,
And ploughed, and sowed, and tilled,
The thorns he rooted out, the rubbish
cleaned,

And blessed the obedient field.
When straight a double harvest rose ; 360
Such as the swarthy Indian mows ;
Or happier climates near the line,
Or paradise manured, and drest by hands
divine.

XIII.

As when the new-born phoenix takes his
way,

His rich paternal regions to survey,
Of airy choristers a numerous train
Attends his wondrous progress o'er the plain ;
So, rising from his father's urn,
So glorious did our Charles return ;

The officious Muses came along, 370
A gay harmonious quire, like angels ever
young :

The Muse that mourns him now his happy
triumph sung.

Even they could thrive in his auspicious
reign ;

And such a plenteous crop they bore
Of purest and well-winnowed grain,
As Britain never knew before.

Though little was their hire, and light their
gain,

Yet somewhat to their share he threw ;
Fed from his hand they sung and flew,
Like birds of paradise that lived on morn-
ing dew. 380

Oh, never let their lays his name forget !
The pension of a prince's praise is great.

Live then, thou great encourager of arts,
Live ever in our thankful hearts ;

Live blest above, almost invoked below ;
Live and receive this pious vow,

Our patron once, our guardian angel now.
Thou I'abius of a sinking state,

Who didst by wise delays divert our fate,
When faction like a tempest rose, 390

In death's most hideous form,
Then art to rage thou didst oppose,

To weather out the storm :
Not quitting thy supreme command,

Thou held'st the rudder with a steady
hand,

Till safely on the shore the bark did
land :

The bark that all our blessings brought,
Charged with thyself and James, a doubly
royal freight.

XIV.

Oh frail estate of human things,
And slippery hopes below ! 400

Now to our cost your emptiness we know,
For 'tis a lesson dearly bought,

Assurance here is never to be sought.
The best, and best beloved of kings,

And best deserving to be so,
When scarce he had escaped the fatal blow

Of faction and conspiracy,

Death did his promised hopes destroy :
 He toiled, he gained, but lived not to enjoy.
 What mists of Providence are these 410
 Through which we cannot see !
 So saints, by supernatural power set free,
 Are left at last in martyrdom to die ;
 Such is the end of oft repeated miracles.
 Forgive me, Heaven, that impious thought ;
 'Twas grief for Charles, to madness wrought,
 That questioned Thy supreme decree !
 Thou didst his gracious reign prolong,
 Even in Thy saints' and angels' wrong,
 His fellow-citizens of immortality : 420
 For twelve long years of exile borne,
 Twice twelve we numbered since his blest
 return :
 So strictly wert thou just to pay,
 Even to the dribble of a day.
 Yet still we murmur, and complain
 The quails and manna should no longer
 rain ;
 Those miracles 'twas needless to renew ;
 The chosen flock has now the promised
 land in view.

XV.

A warlike prince ascends the regal state,
 A prince long exercised by fate : 430
 Long may he keep, though he obtains it
 late,
 Heroes in Heaven's peculiar mould are
 cast,
 They and their poets are not formed in
 haste ;
 Man was the first in God's design, and
 man was made the last.
 False heroes, made by flattery so,
 Heaven can strike out, like sparkles, at
 a blow ;
 But ere a prince is to perfection brought,
 He costs Omnipotence a second thought.
 With toil and sweat,
 With hardening cold, and forming heat, 440
 The Cyclops did their strokes repeat,
 Before the impenetrable shield was wrought.
 It looks as if the Maker would not own
 The noble work for His,
 Before 'twas tried and found a masterpiece.

XVI.

View then a monarch ripened for a throne.
 Alcides thus his race began,
 O'er infancy he swiftly ran ;
 The future god at first was more than man :
 Dangers and toils, and Juno's hate, 450
 Even o'er his cradle lay in wait ;
 And there he grappled first with fate :
 In his young hands the hissing snakes he
 pressed,
 So early was the deity confessed ;
 Thus by degrees he rose to Jove's imperial
 seat ;
 Thus difficulties prove a soul legitimately
 great.
 Like his, our hero's infancy was tried :
 Betimes the Furies did their snakes provide ;
 And to his infant arms oppose
 His father's rebels, and his brother's foes ; 460
 The more oppress, the higher still he rose ;
 Those were the preludes of his fate,
 That formed his manhood, to subdue
 The hydra of a many-headed hissing crew.

XVII.

As after Numa's peaceful reign
 The martial Ancus did the sceptre wield,
 Furbished the rusty sword again,
 Resumed the long-forgotten shield,
 And led the Latins to the dusty field ;
 So James the drowsy genius wakes 470
 Of Britain long entranced in charms,
 Restive and slumbering on its arms :
 'Tis roused, and with a new-strung nerve
 the spear already shakes.
 No neighing of the warrior steeds,
 No drum, or louder trumpet, needs
 To inspire the coward, warm the cold ;
 His voice, his sole appearance, makes them
 bold.
 Gaul and Batavia dread the impending
 blow ;
 Too well the vigour of that arm they know ;
 They lick the dust, and crouch beneath
 their fatal foe. 480
 Long may they fear this awful prince,
 And not provoke his lingering sword ;

Peace is their only sure defence,
 Their best security his word :
 In all the changes of his doubtful state,
 His truth, like heaven's, was kept inviolate,
 For him to promise is to make it fate.
 His valour can triumph o'er land and
 main ;
 With broken oaths his fame he will not
 stain ;
 With conquest basely bought, and with in-
 glorious gain. 480

XVIII.

For once, O Heaven, unfold thy adaman-
 tine book ;
 And let his wondering senate see,
 If not Thy firm immutable decree,
 At least the second page of strong contin-
 gency ;
 Such as consists with wills originally free :
 Let them with glad amazement look
 On what their happiness may be :

Let them not still be obstinately blind,
 Still to divert the good thou hast designed,
 Or with malignant penury, 490
 To starve the royal virtues of his mind.
 Faith is a Christian's and a subject's test ;
 Oh, give them to believe, and they are
 surely blest.

They do ; and with a distant view I see
 The amended vows of English loyalty.
 And all beyond that object, there appears
 The long retinue of a prosperous reign,
 A series of successful years,
 In orderly array, a martial, manly train.
 Behold even to remoter shores, 510
 A conquering navy proudly spread ; ‡
 The British cannon formidably roars ;
 While starting from his oozy bed,
 The asserted ocean rears his reverend head,
 To view and recognise his ancient lord
 again ;
 And with a willing hand restores
 The fasces of the main.

EXTEMPORARY LINES

ADDRESSED ONE DAY AT DINNER TO MRS. CREED.* THE CONVERSATION
 HAD TURNED ON THE ORIGIN OF NAMES.

So much religion in your name doth
 dwell,
 Your soul must needs with piety excel.
 Thus names, like [well-wrought] † pictures
 drawn of old,
 Their owners' nature and their story
 told.

Your name but half expresses, for in you,
 Belief and practice do together go.
 My prayers shall be, while this short life
 endures,
 These may go hand in hand, with you and
 yours ;
 Till Faith hereafter is in vision drowned,
 And practice is with endless glory crowned.

* A cousin of Dryden's.

† This word was inserted by Malone to fill up
 the line. The impromptu was first published by
 him. It had descended in Mrs. Creed's family
 to her great-grandson.

‡ James was successful in sea-fights with the
 Dutch, and enlarged and improved the English
 Navy ; indeed, might be called its second founder.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

A POEM.

IN THREE PARTS.

— — — — —

"Antiquam exquirite matrem."—*VIRG.* *A.* *II.* *iii* 96.

"Et vera incessu patuit Dea."—*Ibid.* *i.* 405.

NOTE.

Less than three years after Dryden had publicly professed (in the "Religio Laici") his adherence to the Church of England, he became a Romanist; and it was said that he had been ordered by his confessor, as a penance for having written the "Spanish Friar," to compose a poem in defence of the Church of Rome; this, however, he denies in the following Preface.

His motive for changing his religion was, of course, thought to be his desire to please James II., and we must own that he chose a very unhappy moment to abjure his faith, even if the conversion were sincere. But it was his last change. He remained faithful to the Church he then entered till his death.

In answer to this poem Montague and Prior wrote their celebrated parody, "The Hind and Panther transversed to the Story of the Country Mouse and the City Mouse."

Dryden's poem was published in April 1636.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

A POEM. IN THREE PARTS.

TO THE READER.

THE nation is in too high a ferment for me to expect either fair war, or even so much as fair quarter, from a reader of the opposite party. All men are engaged either on this side or that ; and though Conscience is the common *Word*, which is given by both, yet if a writer fall among enemies, and cannot give the marks of *their* conscience, he is knocked down before the reasons of his own are heard. A preface, therefore, which is but a bespeaking of favour, is altogether useless. What I desire the reader should know concerning me, he will find in the body of the poem, if he have but the patience to peruse it. Only this advertisement let him take beforehand, which relates to the merits of the cause. No general characters of parties (call them either Sects or Churches) can be so fully and exactly drawn, as to comprehend all the several members of them ; at least all such as are received under that denomination. For example : there are some of the Church by law established who envy not liberty of conscience to Dissenters ; as being well satisfied that, according to their own principles, they ought not to persecute them. Yet these, by reason of their fewness, I could not distinguish from the numbers of the rest, with whom they are embodied in one common name. On the other side, there are many of our Sects, and more indeed than I could reasonably have hoped, who have withdrawn themselves from the communion of the Panther, and embraced this gracious indulgence of his Majesty in point of toleration. But neither to the one nor the other of these is this Satire any way intended : it is aimed only at the refractory and disobedient on either side. For those who are come over to the royal party are consequently supposed to be out of gun-shot. Our physicians have observed, that, in process of time, some diseases have abated of their virulence, and have in a manner worn out their malignity, so as to be no longer mortal ; and why may not I suppose the same concerning some of those who have formerly been enemies to Kingly Government, as well as Catholic Religion ? I hope they have now another notion of both, as having found, by comfortable experience, that the doctrine of persecution is far from being an article of our faith.

It is not for any private man to censure the proceedings of a foreign prince ; but without suspicion of flattery, I may praise our own, who has taken contrary measures, and those more suitable to the spirit of Christianity. Some of the Dissenters, in their addresses

to his Majesty, have said, "That he has restored God to His empire over conscience." I confess I dare not stretch the figure to so great a boldness; but I may safely say, that conscience is the royalty and prerogative of every private man. He is absolute in his own breast, and accountable to no earthly power for that which passes only betwixt God and him. Those who are driven into the fold are, generally speaking, rather made hypocrites than converts.

This indulgence being granted to all the sects, it ought in reason to be expected that they should both receive it, and receive it thankfully. For, at this time of day, to refuse the benefit and adhere to those whom they have esteemed their persecutors, what is it else but publicly to own that they suffered not before for conscience sake, but only out of pride and obstinacy, to separate from a Church for those impositions which they now judge may be lawfully obeyed? After they have so long contended for their classical ordination (not to speak of rites and ceremonies), will they at length submit to an episcopal? If they can go so far out of complaisance to their old enemies, methinks a little reason should persuade them to take another step, and see whither that would lead them.

Of the receiving this toleration thankfully I shall say no more than that they ought, and I doubt not they will, consider from what hands they received it. It is not from a Cyrus, a heathen prince, and a foreigner, but from a Christian king, their native sovereign, who expects a return in specie from them, that the kindness which he has graciously shown them may be retaliated on those of his own persuasion.

As for the poem in general, I will only thus far satisfy the reader, that it was neither imposed on me, nor so much as the subject given me by any man. It was written during the last winter and the beginning of this spring, though with long interruptions of ill-health and other hindrances. About a fortnight before I had finished it, his Majesty's declaration for liberty of conscience came abroad; which, if I had so soon expected, I might have spared myself the labour of writing many things which are contained in the third part of it. But I was always in some hope, that the Church of England might have been persuaded to have taken off the Penal Laws and the Test, which was one design of the poem when I proposed to myself the writing of it.

It is evident that some part of it was only occasional, and not first intended: I mean that defence of myself, to which every honest man is bound, when he is injuriously attacked in print; and I refer myself to the judgment of those who have read the Answer to the Defence of the late King's papers and that of the Duchess (in which last I was concerned) how charitably I have been represented there. I am now informed both of the author and supervisors of his pamphlet, and will reply when I think he can affront me: for I am of Socrates's opinion, that all creatures cannot. In the mean time let him consider whether he deserved not a more severe reprehension than I gave him formerly, for using so little respect to the memory of those whom he pretended to answer; and at his leisure look out for some original treatise of Humility, written by any Protestant in English (I believe I may say in any other tongue): for the magnified piece of Duncomb on that subject, which either he must mean or none, and with which another of his fellows has upbraided me, was translated from the Spanish of Rodriguez; though with the omission of the seventeenth, the twenty-fourth, the twenty-fifth, and the last chapter, which will be found in comparing of the books.

He would have insinuated to the world that her late Highness died not a Roman Catholic. He declares himself to be now satisfied to the contrary, in which he has given up the cause; for matter of fact was the principal debate betwixt us. In the mean time,

he would dispute the motives of her change; how preposterously, let all men judge, when he seemed to deny the subject of the controversy, the change itself. And because I would not take up this ridiculous challenge, he tells the world I cannot argue: but he may as well infer that a Catholic cannot fast, because he will not take up the cudgels against Mrs. James, * to confute the Protestant religion.

I have but one word more to say concerning the poem as such, and abstracting from the matters, either religious or civil, which are handled in it. The first part, consisting most in general characters and narration, I have endeavoured to raise, and give it the majestic turn of heroic poesy. The second, being matter of dispute, and chiefly concerning Church Authority, I was obliged to make as plain and perspicuous as possibly I could; yet not wholly neglecting the numbers, though I had not frequent occasions for the magnificence of verse. The third, which has more of the nature of domestic conversation, is, or ought to be, more free and familiar than the two former.

There are in it two Episodes, or Fables, which are interwoven with the main design; so that they are properly parts of it, though they are also distinct stories of themselves. In both of these I have made use of the commonplaces of Satire, whether true or false, which are urged by the members of the one Church against the other: at which I hope no reader of either party will be scandalised, because they are not of my invention, but as old, to my knowledge, as the times of Boccace and Chaucer on the one side, and as those of the Reformation on the other

* The author of "A Vindication of the Church of England."

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.*

A MILK-WHITE Hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged;
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds,
And Scythian shafts; and many winged wounds
Aimed at her heart; was often forced to fly,
And doomed to death though fated not to die.

Not so her young; for their unequal line
Was hero's make, half human, half divine. 10

Their earthly mould obnoxious was to fate,
The immortal part assumed immortal state.
Of these a slaughtered army lay in blood,
Extended o'er the Caledonian wood,†

Their native walk; whose vocal blood arose,
And cried for pardon on their perjured foes.
Their fate was fruitful, and the sanguine seed,

Endued with souls, increased the sacred breed.

So captive Israel multiplied in chains,
A numerous exile, and enjoyed her pains. 20
With grief and gladness mixed their mother viewed

Her martyred offspring, and their race renewed;

Their corpse to perish, but their kind to last,
So much the deathless plant the dying fruit surpassed.

Panting and pensive now she ranged alone,
And wandered in the kingdoms, once her own.

The common hunt, though from their rage restrained

By sovereign power, her company disdained;

Grinned as they passed, and with a glaring eye

Gave gloomy signs of secret enmity. 30

'Tis true she bounded by, and tripped so light,

They had not time to take a steady sight.
For truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen.

The bloody Bear,‡ an independent beast,
Unlicked to form, in groans her hate expressed.

Among the timorous kind the quaking Hare§

Professed neutrality, but would not swear.
Next her the buffoon Ape,|| as atheists use,
Mimicked all sects, and had his own to choose: 40

* The Hind represents the Roman Church, the Panther, the Church of England.

† These lines allude to the cruelties of the Scottish Covenanters.

‡ The Independents are personified by the Bear. They were a sect who rejected all Church government, except that which every congregation possessed over its own affairs. They chose their own preachers. Butler calls them in "Hudibras," "The maggots of corrupted texts."

§ The Hare represents the Quakers.

|| The Ape, Infidels.

Still when the Lion * looked, his knees he bent,

And paid at church a courtier's compliment.
The bristled Baptist Boar,† impure as he,
(But whitened with the foam of sanctity,) With fat pollutions filled the sacred place,
And mountains levelled in his furious race;
So first rebellion founded was in grace.

But since the mighty ravage, which he made
In German forests, had his guilt betrayed,
With broken tusks, and with a borrowed name, 50

He shunned the vengeance, and concealed the shame;

So lurked in sects unseen. With greater guile

False Reynard ‡ fed on consecrated spoil :
The graceless beast by Athanasius first
Was chased from Nice ; then, by Socinus § nursed,

His impious race their blasphemy renewed,
And nature's King through nature's optics viewed.

Reversed they viewed him lessened to their eye,

Nor in an infant could a God descry :

New swarming sects to this obliquely tend, 60

Hence they began, and here they all will end.

What weight of ancient witness can prevail,

If private reason hold the public scale ?

But, gracious God, how well dost Thou provide

For erring judgments an unerring guide !

Thy throne is darkness in the abyss of light,
A blaze of glory that forbids the sight.

Oh, teach me to believe Thee thus concealed,
And search no farther than Thyself revealed ;

But her alone for my director take, 70
Whom Thou hast promised never to forsake !

* The Lion, James II.

† The Baptist Boar represents the Anabaptists. They were a German sect, very immoral and cruel. In England, however, they were free from crime. They refused to allow infant baptism.

‡ The Ariens.

§ The founder of the Socinians or Unitarians.

My thoughtless youth was winged with vain desires ;

My manhood, long misled by wandering fires,
Followed false lights ; and, when their glimpse was gone,

My pride struck out new sparks of her own.
Such was I, such by nature still I am ;
Be Thine the glory, and be mine the shame.
Good life be now my task : my doubts are done :

What more could fright my faith, than
Three in One ?

Can I believe eternal God could lie 80
Disguised in mortal mould and infancy ?

That the great Maker of the world could die ?

And after that trust my imperfect sense,
Which calls in question His Omnipotence ?
Can I my reason to my faith compel, ||
And shall my sight, and touch, and taste rebel ?

Superior faculties are set aside ;
Shall their subservient organs be my guide ?

Then let the moon usurp the rule of day,
And winking tapers show the sun his way ; 90

For what my senses can themselves perceive,
I need no revelation to believe,

Can they who say the Host should be des-
cried

By sense, define a body glorified ?

Impassible, and penetrating parts ?

Let them declare by what mysterious arts

He shot that body through the opposing
might

Of bolts and bars impervious to the light,
And stood before His train confessed in open
sight.

For since thus wondrously He passed, 'tis
plain 100

One single place two bodies did contain.

And sure the same Omnipotence as well
Can make one body in more places dwell.

Let reason then at her own quarry fly,
But how can finite grasp infinity ?

|| In this passage Dryden defends transubstantiation.

'Tis urged again, that faith did first commence

By miracles, which are appeals to sense,
And thence concluded, that our sense must be

The motive still of credibility.

For latter ages must on former wait, 110
And what began belief, must propagate.

But winnow well this thought, and you shall find

'Tis light as chaff that flies before the wind.
Were all those wonders wrought by power divine,

As means or ends of some more deep design?

Most sure as means, whose end was this alone,

To prove the Godhead of the eternal Son.

God thus asserted, man is to believe

Beyond what sense and reason can conceive,
And for mysterious things of faith rely 120

On the proponent Heaven's authority.

If then our faith we for our guide admit,

Vain is the farther search of human wit,

As when the building gains a surer stay,

We take the useless scaffolding away.

Reason by sense no more can understand ;

The game is played into another hand.

Why choose we then like bilanders* to creep

Along the coast, and land in view to keep,

When safely we may launch into the deep? 130

In the same vessel which our Saviour bore,

Himself the pilot, let us leave the shore,

And with a better guide a better world explore.

Could He His Godhead veil with flesh and blood,

And not veil these again to be our food?

His grace in both is equal in extent ;

The first affords us life, the second nourishment.

And if He can, why all this frantic pain

To construe what His clearest words contain, 140

And make a riddle what He made so plain?

* Bilanders are flat-bottomed boats or vessels used on the coast of Holland.

To take up half on trust, and half to try,
Name it not faith, but bungling bigotry.

Both knave and fool the merchant we may call,

To pay great sums, and to compound the small :

For who would break with Heaven, and would not break for all?

Rest then, my soul, from endless anguish freed :

Nor sciences thy guide, nor sense thy creed.

Faith is the best ensurer of thy bliss ;

The bank above must fail before the venture miss.

But heaven and heaven-born faith are far from thee, 150

Thou first apostate to divinity.

Unkennelled range in thy Polonian plains ;

A fiercer foe the insatiate Wolf † remains.

Too boastful Britain, please thyself no more,
That beasts of prey are banished from thy shore :

The Bear, the Boar, and every savage name,

Wild in effect, though in appearance tame,

Lay waste thy woods, destroy thy blissful bower,

And, muzzled though they seem, the mutes devour.

More haughty than the rest, the wolfish race 160

Appear with belly gaunt, and famished face :

Never was so deformed a beast of grace.

His ragged tail betwixt his legs he wears,

Close clapped for shame ; but his rough crest he rears,

And pricks up his predestinating ears.

His wild disordered walk, his haggard eyes,

Did all the bestial citizens surprise.

Though feared and hated, yet he ruled awhile

As captain or companion of the spoil.

Full many a year his hateful head had been 170

For tribute paid, nor since in Cambria seen.

† The Wolf represents the Presbyterians. Egbert, by receiving wolves' heads as a tribute, extirpated them in Wales.

The last of all the litter 'scaped by chance,
 And from Geneva first infested France.
 Some authors thus his pedigree will trace,
 But others write him of an upstart race ;
 Because of Wickliff's brood no mark he
 brings,
 But his innate antipathy to kings.
 These last deduce him from the Helvetian
 kind,
 Who near the Leman lake his consort
 lined :
 That fiery Zuinglius* first the affection
 bred, 180
 And meagre Calvin blessed the nuptial bed.
 In Israel some believe him whelped long
 since,
 When the proud Sanhedrim † oppressed the
 prince,
 Or, since he will be Jew, derive him higher,
 When Corah with his brethren did conspire
 From Moses' hand the sovereign sway to
 wrest,
 And Aaron of his ephod to divest :
 Till opening earth made way for all to
 pass,
 And could not bear the burden of a class.‡
 The Fox and he came shuffled in the
 dark, 190
 If ever they were stowed in Noah's ark :
 Perhaps not made ; for all their barking
 train
 The Dog (a common species) will contain.
 And some wild Curs, who from their
 masters ran,
 Abhorring the supremacy of man,
 In woods and caves the rebel-race began.
 Oh happy pair, how well have you in-
 creased !
 What ills in Church and State have you re-
 dressed !
 With teeth untried, and rudiments of claws,
 Your first essay was on your native laws : 200

Those having torn with ease, and trampled
 down,
 Your fangs you fastened on the mitred
 crown,
 And freed from God and monarchy your
 town.
 What though your native kennel still be
 small,
 Bounded betwixt a puddle and a wall ;
 Yet your victorious colonies are sent
 Where the north ocean girds the continent.
 Quickened with fire below, your monsters
 breed
 In fenny Holland, and in fruitful Tweed :
 And, like the first, the last affects to be 210
 Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
 As, where in fields the fairy rounds are
 seen,
 A rank sour herbage rises on the green ;
 So, springing where those midnight elves
 advance,
 Rebellion prints the footsteps of the dance.
 Such are their doctrines, such contempt
 they show
 To Heaven above, and to their prince
 below,
 As none but traitors and blasphemers know.
 God, like the tyrant of the skies, is placed,
 And kings, like slaves, beneath the crowd
 debased. 220
 So fulsome is their food, that flocks refuse
 To bite, and only dogs for physic use.
 As, where the lightning runs along the
 ground,
 No husbandry can heal the blasting wound ;
 Nor bladed grass, nor bearded corn succeeds,
 But scales of scurf, and putrefaction breeds :
 Such wars, such waste, such fiery tracks of
 dearth
 Their zeal has left, and such a teemless
 earth.
 But, as the poisons of the deadliest kind
 Are to their own unhappy coasts con-
 fined ; 230
 As only Indian shades of sight deprive,
 And magic plants will but in Colchos thrive ;
 So Presbytery and pestilential zeal
 Can only flourish in a commonweal.

* *Zuinglius* was the Swiss reformer, a canon of Zurich.

† The Sanhedrim are the Parliament of the Commonwealth. In the original edition there is this marginal note, "Vid. Pref. to Heyl. Hist. of Pres."

‡ The Presbyterian classes.

From Celtic woods is chased the wolfish crew,*

But ah ! some pity e'en to brutes is due :
Their native walks, methinks, they might enjoy,

Curbed of their native malice to destroy.
Of all the tyrannies on human kind,
The worst is that which persecutes the mind. 240

Let us but weigh at what offence we strike ;
'Tis but because we cannot think alike.

In punishing of this, we overthrow
The laws of nations and of nature too.
Beasts are the subjects of tyrannic sway,
Where still the stronger on the weaker prey.
Man only of a softer mould is made,
Not for his fellows' ruin, but their aid :
Created kind, beneficent and free,
The noble image of the Deity. 250

One portion of informing fire was given
To brutes, the inferior family of Heaven :
The Smith Divine, as with a careless beat,
Struck out the mute creation at a heat :
But, when arrived at last to human race,
The Godhead took a deep considering space ;

And, to distinguish man from all the rest,
Unlocked the sacred treasures of his breast ;
And mercy mixed with reason did impart,
One to his head, the other to his heart : 260
Reason to rule, but mercy to forgive :
The first is law, the last prerogative.
And like his mind his outward form appeared,

When, issuing naked, to the wondering herd,
He charmed their eyes ; and, for they loved,
they feared :

Not armed with horns of arbitrary might,
Or claws to seize their furry spoils in fight,
Or with increase of feet to o'ertake them in their flight :

Of easy shape, and pliant every way ;
Confessing still the softness of his clay, 270

And kind askings upon their coronation day:
With open hands, and with extended space
Of arms, to satisfy a large embrace.

Thus kneaded up with milk, the new-made man

His kingdom o'er his kindred world began :
Till knowledge misapplied, misunderstood,
And pride of empire soured his balmy blood.
Then, first rebelling, his own stamp he coins ;

The murderer Cain was latent in his loins :
And blood began its first and loudest cry, 280
For differing worship of the Deity.

Thus persecution rose, and farther space
Produced the mighty hunter of his race.
Not so the blessed Pan his flock increased,
Content to fold them from the famished beast :

Mild were his laws ; the Sheep and harmless Hind

Were never of the persecuting kind.
Such pity now the pious pastor shows,
Such mercy from the British Lion flows,
That both provide protection for their foes. 290

Oh happy regions, Italy and Spain,
Which never did those monsters entertain !
The Wolf, the Bear, the Boar, can there advance

No native claim of just inheritance ;
And self-preserving laws, severe in show,
May guard their fences from the invading foe.
Where birth has placed them, let them safely share

The common benefit of vital air.
Themselves unharmed, let them live unharmed ;

Their jaws disabled and their claws disarmed : 300

Here, only in nocturnal howlings bold,
They dare not seize the Hind, nor leap the fold.

More powerful, and as vigilant as they,
The Lion awfully forbids the prey.

Their rage repressed though pinched with famine sore,

They stand aloof, and tremble at his roar :
Much is their hunger, but their fear is more,

* This alludes to the exile of French Huguenots in consequence of the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

These are the chief: to number o'er the rest,

And stand, like Adam, naming every beast,
Were weary work: nor will the Muse describe 310

A slimy-born and sun-begotten tribe;
Who, far from steeples and their sacred sound,

In fields their sullen conventicles found.
These gross, half-animated lumps I leave;
Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive.

But if they think at all, 'tis sure no higher
Than matter, put in motion, may aspire:
Souls that can scarce ferment their mass of clay:

So drossy, so divisible are they,
As would but serve pure bodies for allay: 320
Such souls as shards produce, such beetle things

As only buzz to heaven with evening wings;
Strike in the dark, offending but by chance,
Such are the blindfold blows of ignorance.
They know not beings, and but hate a name;
To them the Hind and Panther are the same.

The Panther, sure the noblest, next the Hind,

And fairest creature of the spotted kind;
Oh, could her inborn stains be washed away,
She were too good to be a beast of prey! 330
How can I praise, or blame, and not offend,
Or how divide the frailty from the friend?
Her faults and virtues lie so mixed, that she

Nor wholly stands condemned, nor wholly free.

Then, like her injured Lion, let me speak;
He cannot bend her, and he would not break.

Unkind already, and estranged in part,
The Wolf begins to share her wandering heart.

Though unpolluted yet with actual ill,
She half commits, who sins but in her will. 340

If, as our dreaming Platonists report,
There could be spirits of a middle sort,

Too black for heaven, and yet too white for hell,

Who just dropped half-way down, nor lower fell;

So poised, so gently she descends from high,
It seems a soft dismission from the sky.

Her house not ancient, whatsoe'er pretence
Her clergy heralds make in her defence;

A second century not half-way run,
Since the new honours of her blood begun. 350

A Lion, old, obscene, and furious made *
By lust, compressed her mother in a shade;
Then, by a left-hand marriage, weds the dame,

Covering adultery with a specious name:
So Schism begot; and Sacrilege and she,
A well-matched pair, got graceless Heresy.
God's and kings' rebels have the same good cause,

To trample down divine and human laws:
Both would be called reformers, and their hate

Alike destructive both to Church and State: 360

The fruit proclaims the plant; a lawless prince
By luxury reformed incontinence;

By ruins, charity; by riots, abstinence.
Confessions, fasts, and penance set aside;
Oh, with what ease we follow such a guide,
Where souls are starved, and senses gratified!

Where marriage-pleasures midnight prayer supply,

And matin bells (a melancholy cry)
Are tuned to merrier notes, Increase and multiply.

Religion shows a rosy-coloured face; 370
Not hattered out with drudging works of grace:

A down-hill reformation rolls apace.
What flesh and blood would crowd the narrow gate,

Or, till they waste their pampered paunches, wait?

All would be happy at the cheapest rate.

* Henry VIII.

Though our lean faith these rigid laws
has given,

The full-fed Mussulman goes fat to heaven ;
For his Arabian prophet with delights
Of sense allured his eastern proselytes.

The jolly Luther, reading him, began 380
To interpret Scriptures by his Alcoran ;

To grub the thorns beneath our tender feet,
And make the paths of Paradise more sweet :

Bethought him of a wife ere half-way gone,
For 'twas uneasy travelling alone ;

And, in this masquerade of mirth and love,
Mistook the bliss of heaven for Bacchanals
above.

Sure he presumed of praise, who came to
stock

The ethereal pastures with so fair a flock,
Burnished, and battenning on their food, to
show 390

Their diligence of careful herds below.

Our Panther, though like these she
changed her head,

Yet, as the mistress of a monarch's bed,
Her front erect with majesty she bore,
The crosier wielded, and the mitre wore.

Her upper part of decent discipline
Showed affectation of an ancient line ;

And Fathers, Councils, Church and
Church's head,

Were on her reverend phylacteries read.

But what disgraced and disavowed the
rest, 400

Was Calvin's brand, that stigmatised the
beast.

Thus, like a creature of a double kind,

In her own labyrinth she lives confined.

To foreign lands no sound of her is come,
Humbly content to be despised at home.

Such is her faith, where good cannot be
had,

At least she leaves the refuse of the bad :

Nice in her choice of ill, though not of best,
And least deformed, because reformed the
least.

In doubtful points betwixt her differing
friends, 410

Where one for substance, one for sign con-
tends,

Their contradicting terms she strives to
join :

Sign shall be substance, substance shall be
sign.

A real presence all her sons allow,

And yet 'tis flat idolatry to bow,

Because the Godhead's there they know
not how.

Her novices are taught that bread and wine
Are but the visible and outward sign,

Received by those who in communion join.
But the inward grace, or the thing signi-
fied, 420

His blood and body, who to save us died ;
The faithful this thing signified receive ;

What is't those faithful then partake or
leave ?

For what is signified and understood,

Is, by her own confession, flesh and blood.
Then, by the same acknowledgment, we
know

They take the sign, and take the substance
too.

The literal sense is hard to flesh and blood,
But nonsense never can be understood.

Her wild belief on every wave is
tossed ; 430

But sure no church can better morals
boast :

True to her king her principles are found ;
Oh, that her practice were but half so
sound !

Steadfast in various turns of state she stood,
And sealed her vowed affection with her
blood :

Nor will I meanly tax her constancy,
That interest or obligation made the tie,
Bound to the fate of murdered monarchy.

Before the sounding axe so falls the vine,
Whose tender branches round the poplar
twine ; 440

She chose her ruin, and resigned her life,
In death undaunted as an Indian wife ;

A rare example ! but some souls we see
Grow hard, and stiffen with adversity :

Yet these by fortune's favours are undone ;
Resolved, into a baser form they run,

And bore the wind, but cannot bear the sun,

Let this be Nature's frailty, or her fate,
Or Isgrim's* counsel, her new-chosen mate;
Still she's the fairest of the fallen crew, 450
No mother more indulgent, but the true.

Fierce to her foes, yet fears her force to
try,

Because she wants innate authority;
For how can she constrain them to obey,
Who has herself cast off the lawful sway?
Rebellion equals all, and those, who toil
In common theft, will share the common
spoil.

Let her produce the title and the right
Against her old superiors first to fight;
If she reform by text, e'en that's as plain 460
For her own rebels to reform again,
As long as words a different sense will bear,
And each may be his own interpreter,
Our airy faith will no foundation find:
The word's a weathercock for every wind:
The Bear, the Fox, the Wolf, by turns pre-
vail;

The most in power supplies the present
gale.

The wretched Panther cries aloud for aid
To Church and Councils, whom she first
betrayed;

No help from Fathers or Tradition's
train: 470

Those ancient guides she taught us to dis-
dain,

And by that Scripture, which she once
abused

To reformation, stands herself accused.

What bills for breach of laws can she prefer,
Expounding which she owns herself may
err?

And, after all her winding ways are tried,
If doubts arise, she slips herself aside,
And leaves the private conscience for the
guide.

If then that conscience set the offender free,
It bars her claim to Church authority. 480

How can she censure, or what crime pre-
tend,

But Scripture may be construed to defend?

E'en those, whom for rebellion she transmits
To civil power, her doctrine first acquits;
Because no disobedience can ensue,
Where no submission to a judge is due;
Each judging for himself, by her consent,
Whom thus absolved she sends to punish-
ment.

Suppose the magistrate revenge her cause,
'Tis only for transgressing human laws. 490
How answering to its end a Church is made,
Whose power is but to counsel and per-
suade?

Oh solid rock, on which secure she stands!
Eternal house, not built with mortal hands!
Oh sure defence against the infernal gate,
A patent during pleasure of the state!

Thus is the Panther neither loved nor
feared,

A mere mock queen of a divided herd;
Whom soon by lawful power she might
control,

Herself a part submitted to the whole. 500
'Then, as the moon who first receives the
light

By which she makes our nether regions
bright,

So might she shine, reflecting from afar
The rays she borrowed from a better star;
Big with the beams, which from her mother
flow,

And reigning o'er the rising tides below:
Now, mixing with a savage crowd, she
goes,

And meanly flatters her inveterate foes,
Ruled while she rules, and losing every hour
Her wretched remnants of precarious
power. 510

One evening, while the cooler shade she
sought,

Revolving many a melancholy thought,
Alone she walked, and looked around in
vain,

With rueful visage, for her vanished train:
None of her sylvan subjects made their
court;

Levées and couchées passed without resort.
So hardly can usurpers manage well
Those whom they first instructed to rebel.

* The wolf.—Orig. edit.

More liberty begets desire for more ;
 The hunger still increases with the store. 530
 Without respect they brushed along the
 wood,
 Each in his clan, and, filled with loathsome
 food,
 Asked no permission to the neighbouring
 flood.
 The Panther, full of inward discontent,
 Since they would go, before them wisely
 went ;
 Supplying want of power by drinking first ;
 As if she gave them leave to quench their
 thirst.
 Among the rest, the Hind, with fearful face,
 Beheld from far the common watering place,
 Nor durst approach ; till with an awful
 roar 530
 The sovereign Lion bade her fear no more.
 Encouraged thus, she brought her young-
 lings nigh,
 Watching the motions of her patron's eye,
 And drank a sober draught ; the rest amazed
 Stood mutely still, and on the stranger
 gazed ;
 Surveyed her part by part, and sought to
 find
 The ten-horned monster in the harmless
 Hind,
 Such as the Wolf and Panther had designed.
 They thought at first they dreamed ; for
 'twas offence
 With them to question certitude of sense, 540
 Their guide in faith : but nearer when they
 drew,
 And had the faultless object full in view,
 Lord, how they all admired her heavenly
 hue !
 Some, who before her fellowship disdained,
 Scarce, and but scarce, from inborn rage
 restrained,
 Now frisked about her, and old kindred
 feigned.

Whether for love or interest, every sect
 Of all the savage nation showed respect.
 The viceroy Panther could not awe the
 herd ;
 The more the company, the less they
 feared. 550
 The surly Wolf with secret envy burst,
 Yet could not howl ; the Hind had seen him
 first :
 But what he durst not speak, the Panther
 durst.
 For when the herd, sufficed, did late re-
 pair
 To ferny heaths, and to their forest lair,
 She made a mannerly excuse to stay,
 Proffering the Hind to wait her half the
 way :
 That, since the sky was clear, an hour of
 talk
 Might help her to beguile the tedious walk.
 With much good-will the motion was em-
 braced, 560
 To chat a while on their adventures past :
 Nor had the grateful Hind so soon forgot
 Her friend and fellow-sufferer in the plot.*
 Yet wondering how of late she grew
 estranged,
 Her forehead cloudy, and her countenance
 changed,
 She thought this hour the occasion would
 present
 To learn her secret cause of discontent,
 Which well she hoped might be with ease
 redressed,
 Considering her a well-bred civil beast,
 And more a gentlewoman than the rest. 570
 After some common talk what rumours ran,
 The lady of the spotted muff began.

* The Popish plot ; the contrivers of which
 were Presbyterians, Latitudinarians, and Re-
 publicans, who had before shown themselves
 enemies to the English as well as the Popish
 Church.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

THE SECOND PART.

"DAME," said the Panther, "times are mended well,
 Since late among the Philistines you fell.
 The toils were pitched, a spacious tract of ground
 With expert huntsmen was encompassed round;
 The inclosure narrowed; the sagacious power
 Of hounds and death drew nearer every hour.
 'Tis true, the younger Lion 'scaped the snare,
 But all your priestly calves lay struggling there;
 As sacrifices on their altars laid;
 While you, their careful mother, wisely fled,
 Not trusting destiny to save your head.
 For, whate'er promises you have applied
 To your unfailing Church, the surer side
 Is four fair legs in danger to provide.
 And whate'er tales of Peter's chair you tell,
 Yet, saving reverence of the miracle,
 The better luck was yours to 'scape so well."
 "As I remember," said the sober Hind, "These toils were for your own dear self designed,
 As well as me; and with the self-same throw,
 To catch the quarry and the vermin too.
 (Forgive the slanderous tongues that called you so.)
 Howe'er you take it now, the common cry
 Then ran you down for your rank loyalty.
 Besides, in Popery they thought you nursed,
 (As evil tongues will ever speak the worst,)

Because some forms, and ceremonies some
 You kept, and stood in the main question dumb.
 Dumb you were born indeed; but thinking long,
 The Test,* it seems, at last has loosed your tongue.
 And to explain what your forefathers meant
 By real presence in the sacrament,
 After long fencing pushed against a wall,
 Your salvo comes, that He's not there at all:
 There changed your faith, and what may change may fall.
 Who can believe what varies every day,
 Nor ever was, nor will be at a stay?"
 "Tortures may force the tongue untruths to tell,
 And I ne'er owned myself infallible,"
 Replied the Panther: "grant such presence were,
 Yet in your sense I never owned it there.
 A real virtue we by faith receive,
 And that we in the sacrament believe."
 "Then," said the Hind, "as you the matter state,
 Not only Jesuits can equivocate;
 For real, as you now the word expound,
 From solid substance dwindles to a sound.
 Methinks an Æsop's fable you repeat;
 You know who took the shadow for the meat:
 Your Church's substance thus you change at will,
 And yet retain your former figure still.

* The Test Act, passed in 1672-3, enjoined the abjuration of the real presence in the sacrament.
 —DERRICK.

I freely grant you spoke to save your life ;
For then you lay beneath the butcher's knife.
Long time you fought, redoubled battery
bore,

But, after all, against yourself you swore ;
Your former self : for every hour your form
Is chopped and changed, like winds before
a storm.

Thus fear and interest will prevail with
some ;

For all have not the gift of martyrdom."

The Panther grinned at this, and thus
replied :

"That men may err was never yet denied.

But, if that common principle be true,

The canon, dame, is levelled full at you.

But, shunning long disputes, I fain would
see

That wondrous wight, Infallibility.

Is he from heaven, this mighty champion,
come?

Or lodged below in subterranean Rome?

First, seat him somewhere, and derive his
race,

Or else conclude that nothing has no place."

"Suppose, (though I disown it,)" said
the Hind,

"The certain mansion were not yet assigned ;

The doubtful residence no proof can bring
Against the plain existence of the thing.

Because philosophers may disagree,

If sight by emission or reception be,

Shall it be thence inferred I do not see ?

But you require an answer positive,

Which yet, when I demand, you dare not
give ;

For fallacies in universals live.

I then affirm that this unfailing guide

In Pope and General Councils must reside ;

Both lawful, both combined : what one
decrees

By numerous votes, the other ratifies :

On this undoubted sense the Church relies.

'Tis true, some doctors in a scantier space,

I mean, in each apart, contract the place.

Some, who to greater length extend the
line,

The Church's after-acceptation join.

This last circumference appears too wide ;
The Church diffused is by the Council
tied ;

As members by their representatives

Obliged to laws, which Prince and Senate
gives.

Thus some contract, and some enlarge the
space :

In Pope and Council, who denies the place,
Assisted from above with God's unfailing
grace ?

Those canons all the needful points contain ;
Their sense so obvious, and their words so
plain,

That no disputes about the doubtful text
Have hitherto the labouring world per-
plexed.

If any should in after-times appear,
New Councils must be called, to make the
meaning clear :

Because in them the power supreme resides ;
And all the promises are to the guides.

This may be taught with sound and safe
defence :

But mark how sandy is your own pretence,
Who, setting Councils, Pope and Church
aside,

Are every man his own presuming guide.

The sacred books, you say, are full and
plain,

And every needful point of truth contain :

All, who can read, interpreters may be :

Thus, though your several Churches dis-
agree,

Yet every saint has to himself alone

The secret of this philosophic stone.

These principles your jarring sects unite,

When differing doctors and disciples fight,
Though Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, holy
chiefs,

Have made a battle-royal of beliefs ;

Or, like wild horses, several ways have
whirled

The tortured text about the Christian
world ;

Each Jehu lashing on with furious force,
That Turk or Jew could not have used if
worse ;

No matter what dissension leaders make,
Where every private man may save a
stake;

Ruled by the Scripture and his own advice,
Each has a blind bye-path to Paradise;
Where, driving in a circle, slow or fast,
Opposing sects are sure to meet at last.

A wondrous charity you have in store 700
For all reformed to pass the narrow door:
So much, that Mahomet had scarcely more.
For he, kind prophet, was for damning
none;

But Christ and Moses were to save their
own:

Himself was to secure his chosen race,
Though reason good for Turks to take
the place,

And he allowed to be the better man,
In virtue of his holier Alcoran.

"True," said the Panther, "I shall ne'er
deny

My brethren may be saved as well as I: 710
Though Huguenots condemn our ordina-
tion,

Succession, ministerial vocation;
And Luther, more mistaking what he read,
Misjoins the sacred body with the bread:
Yet, lady, still remember I maintain,
The Word in needful points is only plain."

"Needless, or needful, I not now con-
tend,

For still you have a loop-hole for a friend,"
(Rejoined the matron): "but the rule you lay
Has led whole flocks, and leads them still
astray 720

In weighty points, and full damnation's
way.

For did not Arius first, Socinus now,
The Son's eternal Godhead disavow?
And did not these by gospel texts alone
Condemn our doctrine, and maintain their
own?

Have not all heretics the same pretence
To plead the Scriptures in their own de-
fence?

How did the Nicene Council then decide
That strong debate? was it by Scripture
tried?

No, sure to those the rebel would not
yield; 730

Squadrons of texts he marshalled in the
field:

That was but civil war, an equal set,
Where piles with piles, and eagles eagles
met.

With text point-blank and plain he faced
the foe,

And did not Satan tempt our Saviour so?
The good old bishops took a simpler way;
Each asked but what he heard his father say,
Or how he was instructed in his youth,
And by tradition's force upheld the truth."

The Panther smiled at this; "And
when," said she, 740

"Were those first Councils disallowed by
me?

Or where did I at sure tradition strike,
Provided still it were apostolic?"

"Friend," said the Hind, "you quit your
former ground,

Where all your faith you did on Scripture
found:

Now 'tis tradition joined with holy writ;
But thus your memory betrays your wit."

"No," said the Panther, "for in that I
view,

When your tradition's forged, and when
'tis true.

I set them by the rule, and, as they
square, 750

Or deviate from undoubted doctrine there,
This oral fiction, that old faith declare."

HIND. "The Council steered, it seems,
a different course:

They tried the Scripture by tradition's force:
But you tradition by the Scripture try;
Pursued by sects, from this to that you fly,
Nor dare on one foundation to rely.
The Word is then deposed, and in this view,
You rule the Scripture, not the Scripture
you."

Thus said the dame, and, smiling, thus
pursued: 760

"I see, tradition then is disallowed,
When not evinced by Scripture to be true,
And Scripture, as interpreted by you.

But here you tread upon unfaithful ground ;
 Unless you could infallibly expound :
 Which you reject as odious Popery,
 And throw that doctrine back with scorn
 on me.

Suppose we on things traditive divide,
 And both appeal to Scripture to decide ;
 By various texts we both uphold our
 claim, 770

Nay, often, ground our titles on the same :
 After long labour lost, and time's expense,
 Both grant the words, and quarrel for the
 sense.

Thus all disputes for ever must depend ;
 For no dumb rule can controversies end.
 Thus, when you said, Tradition must be
 tried

By sacred writ, whose sense yourselves de-
 cide,

You said no more, but that yourselves
 must be

The judges of the Scripture sense, not we.
 Against our Church-tradition you de-
 clare, 780

And yet your clerks would sit in Moses'
 chair :

At least 'tis proved against your argument,
 The rule is far from plain, where all dissent."

"If not by Scriptures, how can we be
 sure,"

Replied the Panther, "what tradition's pure?
 For you may palm upon us new for old :
 All, as they say, that glitters, is not gold."

"How but by following her," replied the
 dame,

"To whom derived from sire to son they
 came ;

Where every age does on another move, 790
 And trusts no farther than the next above ;
 Where all the rounds like Jacob's ladder rise,
 The lowest hid in earth, the topmost in the
 skies."

Sternly the savage did her answer mark,
 Her glowing eyeballs glittering in the dark,
 And said but this : "Since lucre was your
 trade,

Succeeding times such dreadful gaps have
 made,

'Tis dangerous climbing : to your sons and
 you

I leave the ladder, and its omen too."

HIND. "The Panther's breath was ever
 famed for sweet ; 800

But from the Wolf such wishes oft I meet :
 You learned this language from the Blatant
 Beast,*

Or rather did not speak, but were possessed.
 As for your answer, 'tis but barely urged :
 You must evince tradition to be forged ;
 Produce plain proofs ; unblemished authors
 use,

As ancient as those ages they accuse ;
 Till when, 'tis not sufficient to defame :
 An old possession stands till elder quits
 the claim.

Then for our interest, which is named
 alone 810

To load with envy, we retort your own.
 For when traditions in your faces fly,
 Resolving not to yield, you must decry.
 As, when the cause goes hard, the guilty man
 Excepts, and thins his jury all he can ;
 So, when you stand of other aid bereft,
 You to the Twelve Apostles would be left.
 Your friend the Wolf did with more craft
 provide

To set those toys, traditions, quite aside ;
 And Fathers too, unless when, reason
 spent, 820

He cites them but sometimes for ornament.
 But, madam Panther, you, though more
 sincere,

Are not so wise as your adulterer :
 The private spirit is a better blind,
 Than all the dodging tricks your authors
 find.

For they, who left the Scripture to the crowd,
 Each for his own peculiar judge allowed ;
 The way to please them was to make them
 proud.

Thus, with full sails, they ran upon the shelf ;
 Who could suspect a cozenage from him-
 self? 830

* The Blatant Beast in Spenser is an allegorical figure for calumny or slander.

On his own reason safer 'tis to stand,
Than be deceived and damned at second
hand.

But you, who Fathers and traditions take,
And garble some, and some you quite for-
sake,

Pretending Church-authority to fix,
And yet some grains of private spirit mix,
Are, like a mule, made up of differing seed,
And that's the reason why you never breed;
At least not propagate your kind abroad,
For home-dissenters are by statutes sawed. 840
And yet they grow upon you every day,
While you, to speak the best, are at a stay,
For sects, that are extremes, abhor a middle
way.

Like tricks of state, to stop a raging flood,
Or mollify a mad-brained senate's mood :
Of all expedients never one was good.

Well may they argue, (nor can you deny)
If we must fix on Church-authority,
Best on the best, the fountain, not the flood ;
That must be better still, if this be good. 850

Shall she command, who has herself rebelled?
Is Antichrist by Antichrist expelled?
Did we a lawful tyranny displace,
To set aloft a bastard of the race?

Why all these wars to win the Book, if we
Must not interpret for ourselves, but she?
Either be wholly slaves, or wholly free.
For purging fires traditions must not fight ;
But they must prove episcopacy's right.
Thus those led horses are from service
freed ; 860

You never mount them but in time of need.
Like mercenaries, hired for home defence,
They will not serve against their native prince.
Against domestic foes of hierarchy
These are drawn forth, to make fanatics fly ;
But, when they see their countrymen at hand,
Marching against them under Church-com-
mand,

Straight they forsake their colours, and dis-
band."

Thus she, nor could the Panther well
enlarge
With weak defence against so strong a
charge ; 870

But said : " For what did Christ His word
provide,

If still His Church must want a living guide?
And if all saving doctrines are not there,
Orsacred penmen could not make them clear,
From after-ages we should hope in vain
For truths, which men inspired could not
explain."

" Before the word was written," said the
Hind,

" Our Saviour preached His faith to human
kind :

From His apostles the first age received
Eternal truth, and what they taught be-
lieved. 880

Thus by tradition faith was planted first ;
Succeeding flocks succeeding pastors nursed.
This was the way our wise Redeemer chose,
(Who sure could all things for the best dis-
pose)

To fence His fold from their encroaching foes.
He could have writ Himself, but well fore-
saw

The event would be like that of Moses' law ;
Some difference would arise, some doubts
remain,
Like those which yet the jarring Jews main-
tain.

No written laws can be so plain, so pure, 890
But wit may gloss, and malice may obscure ;
Not those indited by his first command,
A prophet graved the text, an angel held
his hand.

Thus faith was ere the written Word ap-
peared,
And men believed, not what they read, but
heard.

But since the apostles could not be confined
To these, or those, but severally designed
Their large commission round the world to
blow,

To spread their faith, they spread their
labours too.

Yet still their absent flock their pains did
share ; 900

They hearkened still, for love produces care.
And, as mistakes arose, or discords fell,
Or bold seducers taught them to rebel,

As charity grew cold, or faction hot,
 Or long neglect their lessons had forgot,
 For all their wants they wisely did provide,
 And preaching by epistles was supplied ;
 So great physicians cannot all attend,
 But some they visit, and to some they send.
 Yet all those letters were not writ to all ; 910
 Nor first intended but occasional,
 Their absent sermons ; nor if they contain
 All needful doctrines, are those doctrines
 plain.

Clearness by frequent preaching must be
 wrought :

They writ but seldom, but they daily taught.
 And what one saint has said of holy Paul,
 ' He darkly writ,' is true applied to all.
 For this obscurity could Heaven provide
 More prudently than by a living guide,
 As doubts arose, the difference to decide? 920
 A guide was therefore needful, therefore
 made ;

And, if appointed, sure to be obeyed.
 Thus, with due reverence to the apostles'
 writ,

By which my sons are taught, to which sub-
 mit ;

I think, those truths, their sacred works
 contain,

The Church alone can certainly explain ;
 That following ages, leaning on the past,
 May rest upon the primitive at last.
 Nor would I thence the Word no rule infer,
 But none without the Church-interpreter. 930
 Because, as I have urged before, 'tis mute,
 And is itself the subject of dispute.
 But what the apostles their successors taught,
 They to the next, from them to us is brought,
 The undoubted sense which is in Scripture
 sought.

From hence the Church is armed, when
 errors rise,

To stop their entrance, and prevent surprise,
 And, safe entrenched within, her foes with-
 out defies.

By these all festering sores her councils heal,
 Which time or has disclosed, or shall
 reveal ; 940

For discord cannot end without a last appeal.

Nor can a council national decide,
 But with subordination to her guide :
 (I wish the cause were on that issue tried.)
 Much less the Scripture ; for suppose debate
 Betwixt pretenders to a fair estate,
 Bequeathed by some legator's last intent ;
 (Such is our dying Saviour's testament :)
 The will is proved, is opened, and is read ;
 The doubtful heirs their differing titles
 plead : 950

All vouch the words their interest to maintain,
 And each pretends by those his cause is plain.
 Shall then the Testament award the right ?
 No, that's the Hungary for which they fight ;
 The field of battle, subject of debate ;
 The thing contended for, the fair estate.
 The sense is intricate, 'tis only clear
 What vowels and what consonants are there.
 Therefore 'tis plain, its meaning must be
 tried

Before some judge appointed to decide." 960
 "Suppose," the fair apostate said, "I grant,
 The faithful flock some living guide should
 want,

Your arguments an endless chase pursue :
 Produce this vaunted leader to our view,
 This mighty Moses of the chosen crew."

The dame, who saw her fainting foe retired,
 With force renewed, to victory aspired ;
 And, looking upward to her kindred sky,
 As once our Saviour owned His Deity,
 Pronounced His words—"She whom ye seek
 am I." 970

Nor less amazed this voice the Panther heard,
 Than were those Jews to hear a God de-
 clared,

Then thus the matron modestly renewed :
 "Let all your prophets and their sects be
 viewed,

And see to which of them yourselves think
 fit

The conduct of your conscience to submit :
 Each proselyte would vote his doctor best,
 With absolute exclusion to the rest :

Thus would your Polish diet disagree,
 And end, as it began, in anarchy : 980
 Yourself the fairest for election stand,
 Because you seem crown-general of the land :

But soon against your superstitious lawn
 Some Presbyterian sabre would be drawn :
 In your established laws of sovereignty
 The rest some fundamental flaw would see,
 And call rebellion gospel liberty.
 To Church-decrees your articles require
 Submission modified, if not entire. 990
 Homage denied, to censures you proceed :
 But when Curtana * will not do the deed,
 You lay that pointless clergy-weapon by,
 And to the laws, your sword of justice, fly.
 Now this your sects the more unkindly take,
 (Those prying varlets hit the blots you make)
 Because some ancient friends of yours declare,
 Your only rule of faith the Scriptures are,
 Interpreted by men of judgment sound,
 Which every sect will for themselves expound ;
 Nor think less reverence to their doctors due 1000
 For sound interpretation, than to you.
 If then, by able heads, are understood
 Your brother prophets, who reformed abroad ;
 Those able heads expound a wiser way,
 That their own sheep their shepherd should obey.
 But if you mean yourselves are only sound,
 That doctrine turns the Reformation round,
 And all the rest are false reformers found ;
 Because in sundry points you stand alone,
 Not in communion joined with any one ; 1010
 And therefore must be all the Church, or none.
 Then, till you have agreed whose judge is best,
 Against this forced submission they protest .
 While sound and sound a different sense explains,
 Both play at hardhead till they break their brains ;
 And from their chairs each other's force defy,
 While unregarded thunders vainly fly.

* The name of King Edward the Confessor's sword without a point, an emblem of mercy still carried before our Sovereigns at their coronation.

I pass the rest, because your Church alone
 Of all usurpers best could fill the throne.
 But neither you, nor any sect beside, 1020
 For this high office can be qualified,
 With necessary gifts required in such a guide.
 For that, which must direct the whole, must be
 Bound in one bond of faith and unity :
 But all your several Churches disagree.
 The consubstantiating Church and priest
 Refuse communion to the Calvinist :
 The French reformed from preaching you restrain,
 Because you judge their ordination vain ;
 And so they judge of yours, but donors must ordain. 1030
 In short, in doctrine, or in discipline,
 Not one reformed can with another join :
 But all from each, as from damnation, fly ;
 No union they pretend, but in Non-Popery.
 Nor, should their members in a synod meet,
 Could any Church presume to mount the seat,
 Above the rest, their discords to decide ;
 None would obey, but each would be the guide :
 And face to face dissensions would increase ;
 For only distance now preserves the peace. 1040
 All in their turns accusers, and accused :
 Babel was never half so much confused :
 What one can plead, the rest can plead as well ;
 For amongst equals lies no last appeal,
 And all confess themselves are fallible.
 Now since you grant some necessary guide,
 All who can err are justly laid aside :
 Because a trust so sacred to confer
 Shows want of such a sure interpreter ;
 And how can he be needful who can err ? 1050
 Then, granting that unerring guide we want,
 That such there is you stand obliged to grant :
 Our Saviour else were wanting to supply
 Our needs, and obviate that necessity.
 It then remains, that Church can only be
 The guide, which owns unfailing certainty ;

Or else you slip your hold, and change your side,

Relapsing from a necessary guide.

But this annexed condition of the crown,
Immunity from errors, you disown; 1060
Here then you shrink, and lay your weak pretences down.

For petty royalties you raise debate;
But this unfailing universal state
You shun; nor dare succeed to such a glorious weight;

And for that cause those promises detest,
With which our Saviour did his Church invest;

But strive to evade, and fear to find them true,

As conscious they were never meant to you:
All which the Mother-Church asserts her own,

And with unrivalled claim ascends the throne. 1070

So when of old the Almighty Father sate
In council, to redeem our ruined state,
Millions of millions, at a distance round,
Silent the sacred consistory crowned,
To hear what mercy, mixed with justice,
could propound:

All prompt, with eager pity, to fulfil
The full extent of their Creator's will.

But when the stern conditions were declared,
A mournful whisper through the host was heard,

And the whole hierarchy, with heads hung down, 1080

Submissively declined the ponderous proffered crown.

Then, not till then, the Eternal Son from high

Rose in the strength of all the Deity;
Stood forth to accept the terms, and underwent

A weight which all the frame of Heaven had bent,

Nor He Himself could bear, but as Omnipotent.

Now, to remove the least remaining doubt,
That e'en the blear-eyed sects may find her out,

Behold what heavenly rays adorn her brows,

What from His wardrobe her Beloved allows 1090

To deck the wedding-day of his unspotted spouse.

Behold what marks of majesty she brings;
Richer than ancient heirs of eastern kings:
Her right hand holds the sceptre and the keys,

To show whom she commands, and who obeys:

With these to bind, or set the sinner free,
With that to assert spiritual royalty.

* "One in herself, not rent by schism, but sound,

Entire, one solid shining diamond;
Not sparkles shattered into sects like you: 1100

One is the Church, and must be to be true:
One central principle of unity.

"As undivided, so from errors free,
As one in faith, so one in sanctity.

Thus she, and none but she, the insulting rage

Of heretics opposed from age to age:
Still when the giant-brood invades her throne,

She stoops from heaven, and meets them half-way down,

And with paternal thunder vindicates her crown. 1110

But like Egyptian sorcerers you stand,
And vainly lift aloft your magic wand,

To sweep away the swarms of vermin from the land:

You could, like them, with like infernal force,

Produce the plague, but not arrest the course.

But when the boils and botches, with disgrace

and public scandal, sat upon the face,
Themselves attacked, the Magi strove no more,

They saw God's finger, and their fate deplore;

* Marks of the Catholic Church from the Nicene Creed.—Original edition.

Themselves they could not cure of the dishonest sore. 1120

"Thus one, thus pure, behold her largely spread,

Like the fair ocean from her mother-bed;
From east to west triumphantly she rides,
All shores are watered by her wealthy tides.

The Gospel's sound, diffused from pole to pole,

Where winds can carry, and where waves can roll,

The self-same doctrine of the sacred page
Conveyed to every clime, in every age.

"Here let my sorrow give my satire place,

To raise new blushes on my British race;
Our sailing ships like common shoars we use, 1130

And through our distant colonies diffuse
The draught of dungeons, and the stench of stews.

Whom, when their home-bred honesty is lost,

We disembody on some far Indian coast:
Thieves, panders, paillards, sins of every sort;

Those are the manufactures we export;
And these the missionaries our zeal has made:

For, with my country's pardon be it said,
Religion is the least of all our trade.

"Yet some improve their traffic more than we; 1140

For they on gain, their only god, rely;
And set a public price on piety.

Industrious of the needle and the chart,
They run full sail to their Japonian mart;

Prevention fear, and, prodigal of fame,
Sell all of Christian to the very name;

Nor leave enough of that to hide their naked shame.

"Thus, of three marks, which in the creed we view,

Not one of all can be applied to you:
Much less the fourth; in vain, alas! you seek 1150

The ambitious title of Apostolic:

God-like descent! 'tis well your blood can be

Proved noble in the third or fourth degree:

For all of ancient that you had before,
(I mean what is not borrowed from our store)

Was error fulminated o'er and o'er;
Old heresies condemned in ages past,

By care and time recovered from the blast.

"'Tis said with ease, but never can be proved,

The Church her old foundations has removed, 1160

And built new doctrines on unstable sands:
Judge that, ye winds and rain: you proved

her, yet she stands.
Those ancient doctrines charged on her,

for new,
Show when, and how, and from what hands they grew.

We claim no power, when heresies grow bold,

To coin new faith, but still declare the old.
How else could that obscene disease be

purged,
When controverted texts are vainly urged?

To prove tradition new, there's somewhat more
Required, than saying, 'Twas not used

before. 1170
Those monumental arms are never stirred

Till schism and heresy draw down Goliath's sword.

"Thus, what you call corruptions, are, in truth,

The first plantations of the Gospel's youth;
Old standard faith: but cast your eyes

again,
And view those errors which new sects maintain,

Or which of old disturbed the Church's peaceful reign;

And we can point each period of the time,

When they began, and who begot the crime;

Can calculate how long the eclipse endured, 1280

Who interposed, what digits were obscured :
Of all which are already passed away,
We know the rise, the progress, and decay.

"Despair at our foundations then to strike,
Till you can prove your faith apostolic ;
A limpid stream drawn from the native source ;

Succession lawful in a lineal course.
Prove any Church, opposed to this our head,

So one, so pure, so unconfinedly spread,
Under one chief of the spiritual state, 1290
The members all combined, and all subordinate.

Show such a seamless coat, from schism so free,

In no communion joined with heresy.
If such a one you find, let truth prevail :
Till when your weights will in the balance fail .

A Church unprincipled kicks up the scale.

"But if you cannot think (nor sure you can
Suppose in God what were unjust in man)
That He, the fountain of eternal grace,
Should suffer falsehood, for so long a space, 1290

To banish truth, and to usurp her place .
That seven successive ages should be lost,
And preach damnation at their proper cost ,
That all your erring ancestors should die,
Drowned in the abyss of deep idolatry :

If piety forbid such thoughts to rise,
Awake, and open your unwilling eyes :
God has left nothing for each age undone,
From this to that wherein He sent His Son :

Then think but well of Him, and half your work is done. 1290

See how His Church, adorned with every grace,

With open arms, a kind forgiving face,
Stands ready to prevent her long-lost son's embrace.

Not more did Joseph o'er his brethren weep,
Nor less himself could from discovery keep

When in the crowd of suppliants they were seen,

And in their crew his best-loved Benjamin.
That pious Joseph in the Church behold,*
To feed your famine, and refuse your gold ;

The Joseph you exiled, the Joseph whom you sold." 1290

Thus, while with heavenly charity she spoke,

A streaming blaze the silent shadows broke ;
Shot from the skies a cheerful azure light :
The birds obscene to forests winged their flight,

And gaping graves received the wandering guilty spright,

Such were the pleasing triumphs of the sky,

For James his late nocturnal victory :

The pledge of his almighty Patron's love,
The fireworks which His angels made above.

I saw myself the lambent easy light † 1290
Gild the brown horror, and dispel the night :

The messenger with speed the tidings bore ;
News, which three labouring nations did restore ;

But Heaven's own Nuntius was arrived before.

By this, the Hind had reached her lonely cell,

And vapours rose, and dews unwholesome fell.

When she, by frequent observation wise,
As one who long on heaven had fixed her eyes,

Discerned a change of weather in the skies.
The western borders were with crimson spread, 1290

The moon descending looked all flaming red ;

She thought good manners bound her to invite

The stranger dame to be her guest that night.

* The renunciation of the Benedictines to the Abbey Lands.—Orig. edit.

† *Poeta loquitur*.—Orig. edit.

'Tis true, coarse diet, and a short repast,
(She said) were weak inducements to the
taste

Of one so nicely bred, and so unused to fast :
But what plain fare her cottage could afford,
A hearty welcome at a homely board,
Was freely hers ; and, to supply the rest,
An honest meaning, and an open breast : 1280
Last, with content of mind, the poor man's
wealth,

A grace-cup to their common patron's
health.

This she desired her to accept, and stay,
For fear she might be 'wildered in her way,
Because she wanted an unerring guide,
And then the dew-drops on her silken
hide

Her tender constitution did declare,
Too lady-like a long fatigue to bear,
And rough inclemencies of raw nocturnal
air.

But most she feared that, travelling so
late, 1280

Some evil-minded beasts might lie in wait,
And without witness wreak their hidden
hate.

The Panther, though she lent a listening
ear,

Had more of lion in her than to fear :
Yet wisely weighing, since she had to deal
With many foes, their numbers might pre-
vail,

Returned her all the thanks she could afford ;
And took her friendly hostess at her word .
Who, entering first her lowly roof, a shed

With hoary moss, and winding ivy
spread, 1270

Honest enough to hide an humble hermit's
head,

Thus graciously bespoke her welcome
guest :

" So might these walls, with your fair pre-
sence blest,

Become your dwelling-place of everlasting
rest ;

Not for a night, or quick revolving year,
Welcome an owner, not a sojourner.

This peaceful seat my poverty secures ;
War seldom enters but where wealth allures :
Nor yet despise it ; for this poor abode
Has oft received, and yet receives a
God ; 1280

A God, victorious of the Stygian race,
Here laid his sacred limbs, and sanctified
the place.

This mean retreat did mighty Pan contain :
Be emulous of him, and pomp disdain,
And dare not to debase your soul to gain."

The silent stranger stood amazed to see
Contempt of wealth, and wilful poverty ;
And, though ill habits are not soon con-
trolled,

Awhile suspended her desire of gold ;
But civilly drew in her sharpened paws, 1280
Not violating hospitable laws,
And pacified her tail, and licked her frothy
jaws.

The Hind did first her country cates
provide ;

Then couched herself securely by her side.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

THE THIRD PART.

MUCH malice mingled with a little wit,
Perhaps, may censure this mysterious writ :
Because the muse has peopled Caledon
With Panthers, Bears, and Wolves, and
beasts unknown,
As if we were not stocked with monsters of
our own.

Let Æsop answer, who has set to view 1300
Such kinds as Greece and Phrygia never
knew ;

And mother Hubbard, in her homely dress,*
Has sharply blamed a British Lioness ; †
That queen, whose feast the factious rabble
keep,

Exposed obscenely naked and asleep.
Led by those great examples, may not I
The wanted organs of their words supply ?
If men transact like brutes, 'tis equal then
For brutes to claim the privilege of men.

Others our Hind of folly will indite, 1310
To entertain a dangerous guest by night.
Let those remember, that she cannot die
Till rolling time is lost in round eternity ;
Nor need she fear the Panther, though un-
tamed,
Because the Lion's peace was now pro-
claimed :

The wary savage would not give offence,
To forfeit the protection of her Prince ;
But watched the time her vengeance to
complete,

When all her furry sons in frequent Senate
met ;

Meanwhile she quenched her fury at the
flood, 1320
And with a lenten salad cooled her blood.
Their commons, though but coarse, were
nothing scant,
Nor did their minds an equal banquet
want.

For now the Hind, whose noble nature
strove

To express her plain simplicity of love,
Did all the honours of her house so well,
No sharp debates disturbed the friendly
meal.

She turned the talk, avoiding that extreme,
To common dangers past, a sadly-pleasing
theme ;

Remembering every storm which tossed the
state, 1330

When both were objects of the public
hate,

And dropped a tear betwixt for her own
children's fate.

Nor failed she then a full review to make
Of what the Panther suffered for her sake :
Her lost esteem, her truth, her loyal care,
Her faith unshaken to an exiled heir,
Her strength to endure, her courage to defy ;
Her choice of honourable infamy.

On these, prolixly thankful, she enlarged ;
Then with acknowledgments herself she
charged ; 1340

For friendship, of itself an holy tie,
Is made more sacred by adversity.
Now should they part, malicious tongues
would say,

They met like chance companions on the
way,

* See Spenser's "Mother Hubbard's Tale,"
line 952 and following.

† Elizabeth.

Whom mutual fear of robbers had possessed ;

While danger lasted, kindness was professed ;

But that once o'er, the short-lived union ends :

The road divides, and there divide the friends.

The Panther nodded when her speech was done,

And thanked her coldly in a hollow tone : 1380

But said her gratitude had gone too far
For common offices of Christian care.

If to the lawful heir she had been true,
She paid but Cæsar what was Cæsar's due.

"I might," she added, "with like praise describe

Your suffering sons, and so return your bribe :

But incense from my hands is poorly prized ;

For gifts are scorned where givers are despised.

I served a turn, and then was cast away ;

You, like the gaudy fly, your wings display, 1380

And sip the sweets, and bask in your great patron's day."

This heard, the matron was not slow to find

What sort of malady had seized her mind :
Disdain, with gnawing envy, fell despite,

And cankered malice stood in open sight :
Ambition, interest, pride without control,

And jealousy, the jaundice of the soul ;

Revenge, the bloody minister of ill,

With all the lean tormentors of the will.

'Twas easy now 'to guess from whence arose 1370

Her new-made union with her ancient foes,

Her forced civilities, her faint embrace,

Affected kindness with an altered face :

Yet durst she not too deeply probe the wound,

As hoping still the nobler parts were sound :

But strove with anodynes to assuage the smart,

And mildly thus her medicine did impart.

"Complaints of lovers help to ease their pain ;

It shows a rest of kindness to complain ;

A friendship loth to quit its former hold ; 1380

And conscious merit may be justly bold.

But much more just your jealousy would show,

If others' good were injury to you :

Witness, ye heavens, how I rejoice to see

Rewarded worth and rising loyalty.

Your warrior offspring that upheld the crown,

The scarlet honours of your peaceful gown,
Are the most pleasing objects I can find,

Charms to my sight, and cordials to my mind :

When virtue spooms* before a prosperous gale, 1390

My heaving wishes help to fill the sail ;

And if my prayers for all the brave were heard,

Cæsar should still have such, and such should still reward.

"The laboured earth your pains have sowed and tilled ;

'Tis just you reap the product of the field :

Yours be the harvest, 'tis the beggar's gain
To glean the fallings of the loaded wain.

Such scattered ears as are not worth your care,

Your charity, for alms, may safely spare,

And alms are but the vehicles of prayer. 1400

My daily bread is literally implored ;

I have no barns nor granaries to hoard.

If Cæsar to his own his hand extends,

Say which of yours his charity offends :

You know he largely gives to more than are his friends.

Are you defrauded, when he feeds the poor ?

Our mite decreases nothing of your store.

* *Virtue spooms*] Goes right before the wind. Spoom is a nautical term for doing so.

I am but few, and by your fare you see
My crying sins are not of luxury.

Some juster motive sure your mind with-
draws, 1410

And makes you break our friendship's holy
laws ;

For barefaced envy is too base a cause.

"Show more occasion for your discontent :
Your love, the Wolf, would help you to
invent :

Some German quarrel, or, as times go now,
Some French, where force is uppermost,
will do.

When at the fountain's head, as merit ought
To claim the place, you take a swilling
draught,

How easy 'tis an envious eye to throw,
And tax the sheep for troubling streams
below ; 1420

Or call her (when no farther cause you
find)

An enemy professed of all your kind.
But then, perhaps, the wicked world would
think,

The Wolf designed to eat as well as drink."
This last allusion galled the Panther
more,

Because indeed it rubbed upon the sore.
Yet seemed she not to wince, though
shrewdly pained :

But thus her passive character maintained.
"I never grudged, whate'er my foes
report,

Your flaunting fortune in the Lion's
Court. 1430

You have your day, or you are much
belied,

But I am always on the suffering side :
You know my doctrine, and I need not say
I will not, but I cannot disobey.

On this firm principle I ever stood ;
He of my sons who fails to make it good,
By one rebellious act renounces to my
blood."

"Ah," said the Hind, "how many sons
have you

Who call you mother, whom you never
knew !

But most of them who that relation
plead, 1440
Are such ungracious youths as wish you
dead.

They gape at rich revenues which you hold,
And fain would nibble at your grandame
gold ;

Enquire into your years, and laugh to find
Your crazy temper shows you much
declined.

Were you not dim and doted, you might see
A pack of cheats that claim a pedigree,
No more of kin to you, than you to me.

Do you not know, that, for a little coin,
Heralds can foist a name into the line : 1450
They ask you blessing but for what you
have,

But once possessed of what with care you
save,

The wanton boys would piss upon your
grave.

"Your sons of latitude that court your
grace,

Though most resembling you in form and
face,

Are far the worst of your pretended race.
And, but I blush your honesty to blot,

Pray God you prove them lawfully begot :
For in some Popish libels I have read,
The Wolf has been too busy in your bed ; 1460
At least their hinder parts, the belly-piece,
The paunch, and all that Scorpio claims,
are his.

Their malice too a sore suspicion brings ;
For though they dare not bark, they snarl
at kings.

Nor blame them for intruding in your
line ;

Fat bishoprics are still of right divine.
"Think you your new French proselytes *

are come
To starve abroad, because they starved at
home ?

Your benefices twinkled from afar,
They found the new Messiah by the star : 1470

* The Huguenots who came to England after
Louis XIV. had revoked the edict of Nantes.

Those Swisses fight on any side for pay,
And 'tis the living that conforms, not they.
Mark with what management their tribes
divide,

Some stick to you, and some to t'other side,
That many churches may for many mouths
provide.

More vacant pulpits would more converts
make ;

All would have latitude enough to take :
The rest unbeneficed your sects maintain ;
For ordinations without cures are vain,
And chamber practice is a silent gain. 1480
Your sons of breadth at home are much
like these ;

Their soft and yielding metals run with ease :
They melt, and take the figure of the mould ;
But harden and preserve it best in gold."

"Your Delphic sword," the Panther then
replied,

"Is double-edged, and cuts on either side.
Some sons of mine, who bear upon their
shield

Three steeples argent in a sable field,
Have sharply taxed your converts, who,
unfed,

Have followed you for miracles of bread ; 1490
Such who themselves of no religion are,
Allured with gain, for any will declare.
Bare lies with bold assertions they can face ;
But dint of argument is out of place.

The grim logician puts them in a fright ;
'Tis easier far to flourish than to fight.

Thus our eighth Henry's marriage they
defame ;

They say the schism of beds began the game,
Divorcing from the Church to wed the dame :
Though largely proved, and by himself pro-
fessed, 1500

That conscience, conscience would not let
him rest ;

I mean, not till possessed of her he loved,
And old, uncharming Catherine was re-
moved.

For sundry years before he did complain,
And told his ghostly confessor his pain.

With the same impudence, without a
ground,

They say, that look the Reformation round,
No Treatise of Humility is found.

But if none were, the Gospel does not want ;
Our Saviour preached it, and I hope you
grant, 1510

The Sermon on the Mount was Protestant."

"No doubt," replied the Hind, "as sure
as all

The writings of Saint Peter and Saint Paul :
On that decision let it stand or fall.

Now for my converts, who, you say, unfed,
Have followed me for miracles of bread ;
Judge not by hearsay, but observe at least,
If since their change their loaves have been
increased.

The Lion buys no converts ; if he did,
Beasts would be sold as fast as he could
bid. 1520

Tax those of interest who conform for gain,
Or stay the market of another reign :
Your broad-way sons would never be too
nice

To close with Calvin, if he paid their price ;
But, raised three steeples higher, would
change their note,

And quit the cassock for the canting-coat.
Now, if you damn this censure, as too
bold,

Judge by yourselves, and think not others
sold.

"Meantime my sons accused, by fame's
report,

Paysmall attendance at the Lion's court, 1530
Nor rise with early crowds, nor flatter late ;
(For silently they beg, who daily wait.)

Preferment is bestowed, that comes un-
sought ;

Attendance is a bribe, and then 'tis bought.
How they should speed, their fortune is un-
tried ;

For not to ask, is not to be denied.
For what they have, their God and King
they bless,

And hope they should not murmur, had
they less.

But, if reduced subsistence to implore,
In common prudence they would pass your
door. 1540

Unpittied Hudibras,* your champion friend,
Has shown how far your charities extend.
This lasting verse shall on his tomb be read,
'He shamed you living, and upbraids you dead.'

"With odious atheist names you load
your foes;

Your liberal Clergy why did I expose?
It never fails in charities like those.
In climes where true Religion is professed,
That imputation were no laughing jest.
But *Imprimatur*, with a chaplain's name, 1580
Is here sufficient licence to defame.

What wonder is't that black detraction
thrives;

The homicide of names is less than lives;
And yet the perjured murderer survives."

This said, she paused a little, and sup-
pressed

The boiling indignation of her breast.
She knew the virtue of her blade, nor would
Pollute her satire with ignoble blood:
Her panting foe she saw before her lie,
And back she drew the shining weapon
dry. 1590

So when the generous Lion has in sight
His equal match, he rouses for the fight;
But when his foe lies prostrate on the plain,
He sheathes his paws, uncurls his angry
mane,

And, pleased with bloodless honours of the
day,

Walks over and disdains the inglorious prey.
So James, if great with less we may compare,
Arrests his rolling thunder-bolts in air;
And grants ungrateful friends a lengthened
space,

To implore the remnants of long-suffering
grace. 1570

This breathing-time the matron took;
and then

Resumed the thread of her discourse
again.—

* The poet Butler, author of "Hudibras," who never received any reward for his fine satire, did not leave enough money to bury him; but the King, not the Church, was to blame for this neglect.

"Be vengeance wholly left to powers divine,
And let Heaven judge betwixt your sons and
mine:

If joys hereafter must be purchased here
With loss of all that mortals hold so dear,
Then welcome infamy and public shame,
And, last, a long farewell to worldly fame.
'Tis said with ease, but, oh, how hardly tried
By haughty souls to human honour tied! 1590
Oh, sharp convulsive pangs of agonising
pride!

Down then, thou rebel, never more to rise,
And what thou didst, and dost, so dearly
prize,

That fame, that darling fame, make that
thy sacrifice.

'Tis nothing thou hast given, then add thy
tears

For a long race of unrepenting years:
'Tis nothing yet, yet all thou hast to give:
Then add those may-be years thou hast to
live:

Yet nothing still; then poor, and naked
come,

Thy father will receive his unthrift home, 1590
And thy blest Saviour's blood discharge the
mighty sum.

"Thus" (she pursued) "I discipline a son,
Whose unchecked fury to revenge would
run;

He champs the bit, impatient of his loss,
And starts aside, and flounders at the cross.
Instruct him better, gracious God, to know,
As thine is vengeance, so forgiveness too:
That, suffering from ill tongues, he bears
no more

Than what his Sovereign bears, and what
his Saviour bore.

"It now remains for you to school your
child, 1600

And ask why God's anointed he reviled;
A King and Princess dead! did Shimei
worse?

The curser's punishment should fright the
curse:

Your son was warned, and wisely gave it o'er,
But he, who counselled him, has paid the
score:

The heavy malice could no higher tend,
But woe to him on whom the weights
descend.

So to permitted ills the dæmon flies;
His rage is aimed at Him who rules the skies:
Constrained to quit his cause, no succour
found, 1610

The foe discharges every tire around,
In clouds of smoke abandoning the fight;
But his own thundering peals proclaim his
flight.

"In Henry's change his charge as ill
succeeds;

To that long story little answer needs:
Confront but Henry's words with Henry's
deeds.

Were space allowed, with ease it might be
proved,

What springs his blessed reformation moved.
The dire effects appeared in open sight,
Which from the cause he calls a distant
flight, 1620

And yet no larger leap than from the sun
to light.

"Now last your sons a double pæan
sound,

A Treatise of Humility is found.

'Tis found, but better it had ne'er been
sought,

Than thus in Protestant procession brought.
The famed original through Spain is known,
Rodriguez' work, my celebrated son,
Which yours, by ill-translating, made his
own;

Concealed its author, and usurped the name,
The basest and ignoblest theft of fame. 1630
My altars kindled first that living coal;
Restore, or practise better what you stole:
That virtue could this humble verse inspire,
'Tis all the restitution I require."

Glad was the Panther that the charge was
closed,

And none of all her fav'rite sons exposed.
For laws of arms permit each injured man
To make himself a saver where he can.

Perhaps the plundered merchant cannot tell
The names of pirates in whose hands he
fell; 1640

But at the den of thieves he justly flies,
And every Algerine is lawful prize.

No private person in the foe's estate
Can plead exemption from the public fate,
Yet Christian laws allow not such redress;
Then let the greater supersede the less.

But let the abettors of the Panther's crime
Learn to make fairer wars another time.
Some characters may sure be found to write
Among her sons; for 'tis no common
sight, 1650

A spotted dam, and all her offspring white.
The savage, though she saw her plea
controlled,

Yet would not wholly seem to quit her hold,
But offered fairly to compound the strife,
And judge conversion by the convert's life.
"Tis true," she said, "I think it some-
what strange,

So few should follow profitable change:
For present joys are more to flesh and blood,
Than a dull prospect of a distant good.

'Twas well alluded by a son of mine, 1660
(I hope to quote him is not to purloin)
Two magnets, heaven and earth, allure to
bliss;

The larger loadstone that, the nearer this:
The weak attraction of the greater fails;
We nod a while, but neighbourhood pre-
vails:

But when the greater proves the nearer too,
I wonder more your converts come so slow.
Methinks in those who firm with me remain,
It shows a nobler principle than gain."

"Your inference would be strong" (the
Hind replied) 1670

"If yours were in effect the suffering side:
Your clergy sons their own in peace possess,
Nor are their prospects in reversion less.
My proselytes are struck with awful dread;
Your bloody comet-laws hang blazing o'er
their head:

The respite they enjoy but only lent,
The best they have to hope, protracted
punishment.

Be judge yourself, if interest may prevail,
Which motives, yours or mine, will turn
the scale,

While pride and pomp allure, and plenteous
 cease, 1680

That is, till man's predominant passions
 cease,

Admire no longer at my slow increase.

"By education most have been misled;
 So they believe, because they so were bred.
 The priest continues what the nurse began,
 And thus the child imposes on the man.

The rest I named before, nor need repeat.
 But interest is the most prevailing cheat,
 The sly seducer both of age and youth;
 They study that, and think they study
 truth. 1690

When interest fortifies an argument,
 Weak reason serves to gain the will's assent;
 For souls, already warped, receive an easy
 bent.

Add long prescription of established laws,
 And pique of honour to maintain a cause,
 And shame of change, and fear of future
 ill,

And zeal, the blind conductor of the will;
 And chief, among the still-mistaking crowd,
 The fame of teachers obstinate and proud,
 And, more than all, the private judge
 allowed; 1700

Disdain of Fathers which the dance began,
 And last, uncertain whose the narrower span,
 The clown unread, and half-read gentle-
 man."

To this the Panther, with a scornful
 smile:

"Yet still you travail with unwearied toil,
 And range around the realm without control,
 Among my sons for proselytes to prowl,
 And here and there you snap some silly
 soul.

You hinted fears of future change in state;
 Pray Heaven you did not prophesy your
 fate. 1710

Perhaps, you think your time of triumph near,
 But may mistake the season of the year;
 The Swallows' fortune gives you cause to
 fear."

"For charity," replied the matron, "tell
 What sad mischance those pretty birds
 befel."

"Nay, no mischance," the savage dame
 replied,

"But want of wit in their unerring guide,
 And eager haste, and gaudy hopes, and
 giddy pride.

Yet, wishing timely warning may prevail,
 Make you the moral, and I'll tell the
 tale. 1720

"The Swallow, privileged above the rest
 Of all the birds, as man's familiar guest,
 Pursues the sun, in summer brisk and bold,
 But wisely shuns the persecuting cold:
 Is well to chancels and to chimneys known,
 Though 'tis not thought she feeds on smoke
 alone.

From hence she has been held of heavenly
 line,

Endued with particles of soul divine.
 This merry chorister had long possessed
 Her summer seat, and feathered well her
 nest: 1730

Till frowning skies began to change their
 cheer,
 And time turned up the wrong side of the
 year;

The shedding trees began the ground to
 strow
 With yellow leaves, and bitter blasts to
 blow.

Sad auguries of winter thence she drew,
 Which, by instinct, or prophecy, she knew:
 When prudence warned her to remove
 betimes,
 And seek a better heaven, and warmer
 climes.

"Her sons were summoned on a steeple's
 height,
 And, called in common council, vote a
 flight; 1740

The day was named, the next that should
 be fair:

All to the general rendezvous repair,
 They try their fluttering wings, and trust
 themselves in air.

But whether upward to the moon they go,
 Or dream the winter out in caves below,
 Or hawk at flies elsewhere, concerns not us
 to know.

"Southwards, you may be sure, they bent
their flight,

And harboured in a hollow rock at night :
Next morn they rose, and set up every sail ;
The wind was fair, but blew a mackerel
gale : 1750

The sickly young sat shivering on the shore,
Abhorred salt water never seen before,
And prayed their tender mothers to delay
The passage, and expect a fairer day.

"With these the Martin readily concurred,
A church-begot, and church-believing bird :
Of little body, but of lofty mind,
Round-bellied, for a dignity designed,
And much a dunce, as Martins are by kind.
Yet often quoted Canon-laws, and Code, 1760
And Fathers which he never understood ;
But little learning needs in noble blood.
For, sooth to say, the Swallow brought him
in,

Her household chaplain, and her next of kin :
In superstition silly to excess,
And casting schemes by planetary guess :
In fine, short-winged, unfit himself to fly,
His fear foretold foul weather in the sky.

"Besides, a Raven from a withered oak,
Left of their lodging, was observed to
croak. 1770

That omen liked him not ; so his advice
Was present safety, bought at any price :
(A seeming pious care, that covered
cowardice.)

To strengthen this, he told a boding dream,
Of rising waters, and a troubled stream,
Sure sign of anguish, dangers, and distress,
With something more, not lawful to express :
By which he silly seemed to intimate
Some secret revelation of their fate.

For he concluded, once upon a time, 1780
He found a leaf inscribed with sacred
rhyme,

Whose antique characters did well denote
The Sibyl's hand of the Cumæan grot :

The mad divineress had plainly writ,
A time should come (but many ages yet)
In which, sinister destinies ordain,
A dame should drown with all her feathered
train ;

And seas from thence be called the
Chelidonian main.

At this, some shook for fear, the more
devout
Arose, and blessed themselves from head
to foot. 1790

" 'Tis true, some stagers of the wiser sort
Made all these idle wonderments their
sport :

They said, their only danger was delay,
And he, who heard what every fool could
say,
Would never fix his thought, but trim his
time away.

The passage yet was good ; the wind, 'tis
true,
Was somewhat high, but that was nothing
new,

Nor more than usual equinoxes blew.
The sun (already from the Scales declined)
Gave little hopes of better days behind, 1800
But change from bad to worse of weather
and of wind.

Nor need they fear the dampness of the sky
Should flag their wings, and hinder them
to fly,

'Twas only water thrown on sails to dry.
But, least of all, philosophy presumes
Of truth in dreams, from melancholy fumes :
Perhaps the Martin, housed in holy ground,
Might think of ghosts that walk their mid-
night round,

Till grosser atoms, tumbling in the stream
Of fancy, madly met, and clubbed into a
dream : 1810

As little weight his vain presages bear,
Of ill effect to such alone who fear ;
Most prophecies are of a piece with these,
Each Nostradamus can foretell with ease :
Not naming persons, and confounding
times,

One casual truth supports a thousand lying
rhymes.

"The advice was true ; but fear had seized
the most,

And all good counsel is on cowards lost.
The question crudely put to shun delay,
'Twas carried by the major part to stay. 1820

"His point thus gained, Sir Martin dated
thence

His power, and from a priest became a
prince.

He ordered all things with a busy care,
And cells and refectories did prepare,
And large provisions laid of winter fare :
But now and then let fall a word or two
Of hope, that Heaven some miracle might
show,

And for their sakes the sun should backward
go ;

Against the laws of nature upward climb,
And, mounted on the Ram, renew the
prime : 1880

For which two proofs in sacred story lay,
Of Ahaz' dial and of Joshua's day.

In expectation of such times as these,
A chapel housed them, truly called of ease :
For Martin much devotion did not ask ;
They prayed sometimes, and that was all
their task.

"It happened (as beyond the reach of wit
Blind prophecies may have a lucky hit)
That this accomplished, or at least in part,
Gave great repute to their new Merlin's
art. 1840

Some Swifts,* the giants of the Swallow
kind,

Large-limbed, stout-hearted, but of stupid
mind,

(For Swisses, or for Gibeonites designed)
These lubbers, peeping through a broken
pane,

To seek fresh air, surveyed the neighbouring
plain ;

And saw (but scarcely could believe their
eyes)

New blossoms flourish, and new flowers
arise :

As God had been abroad, and, walking there,
Had left His footsteps, and reformed the
year : 1880

The sunny hills from far were seen to glow
With glittering beams, and in the meads
below

The burnished brooks appeared with liquid
gold to flow.

At last they heard the foolish Cuckoo sing,
Whose note proclaimed the holy-day of
spring.

"No longer doubting, all prepare to fly,
And repossess their patrimonial sky.

The priest before them did his wings display ;
And that good omens might attend their
way,

As luck would have it, 'twas St. Martin's
day.

"Who but the Swallow now triumphs
alone? 1890

The canopy of heaven is all her own :

Her youthful offspring to their haunts repair,
And glide along in glades, and skim in
air,

And dip for insects in the purling springs,
And stoop on rivers to refresh their wings.

Their mothers think a fair provision made,
That every son can live upon his trade :

And, now the careful charge is off their
hands,

Look out for husbands, and new nuptial
bands :

The youthful widow longsto be supplied ; 1870
But first the lover is by lawyers tied

To settle jointure-chimneys on the bride.
So thick they couple, in so short a space,

That Martin's marriage-offerings rise apace.
Their ancient houses, running to decay,

Are furnished up, and cemented with clay ;
They teem already ; stores of eggs are

laid,
And brooding mothers call Lucina's aid.

Fame spreads the news, and foreign fowls
appear

In flocks to greet the new returning year, 1890
To bless the founder, and partake the

cheer.
"And now 'twas time (so fast their
numbers rise)

To plant abroad, and people colonies.
The youth drawn forth, as Martin had

desired,
(For so their cruel destiny required)

Were sent far off on an ill-fated day ;

* Otherwise called *Marlets*.—Original edition.

The rest would needs conduct them on
their way,

And Martin went, because he feared alone
to stay.

* So long they flew with Inconsiderate-
haste, 1890

That now their afternoon began to waste ;
And, what was ominous, that very morn
The sun was entered into Capricorn ;
Which, by their bad astronomers' account,
That week the Virgin balance should
remount.

An infant moon eclipsed him in his way,
And hid the small remainders of his day.
The crowd, amazed, pursued no certain
mark ;

But birds met birds, and justled in the dark :
Few mind the public in a panic fright ;
And fear increased the horror of the night. 1890
Night came, but unattended with repose ;
Alone she came, no sleep their eyes to
close :

Alone, and black she came ; no friendly
stars arose.

"What should they do, beset with dangers
round,

No neighbouring dorp, no lodging to be
found,

But bleak plains, and bare unhospitable
ground.

The latter brood, who just began to fly,
Sick-feathered, and unpractised in the sky,
For succour to their helpless mother call ;
She spread her wings ; some few beneath
them crawl ; 1910

She spread them wider yet, but could not
cover all.

To augment their woes, the winds began to
move

Debate in air, for empty fields above,
Till Boreas got the skies, and poured amain
His rattling hailstones mixed with snow and
rain.

"The joyless morning late arose, and
found

A dreadful desolation reign around,
Some buried in the snow, some frozen to
the ground.

The rest were struggling still with death, and
lay

The Crows' and Ravens' rights, an unde-
fended prey : 1890

Excepting Martin's race ; for they and he
Had gained the shelter of a hollow tree :

But soon discovered by a sturdy clown,
He headed all the rabble of a town,
And finished them with bats, or polled them
down.

Martin himself was caught alive, and tried
For treasonous crimes, because the laws
provide

No Martin there in winter shall abide
High on an oak, which never leaf shall
bear,

He breathed his last, exposed to open air ; 1890
And there his corpse, unblessed, is hanging
still,

To show the change of winds with his pro-
phetic bill."

The patience of the Hind did almost
fail ;

For well she marked the malice of the tale :
Which ribald art their Church to Luther
owes ;

In malice it began, by malice grows ;
He sowed the serpent's teeth, an iron-harvest
rose.

But most in Martin's character and fate,
She saw her slandered sons, the Panther's
hate,

The people's rage, the persecuting state ; 1890
Then said, "I take the advice in friendly part ;
You clear your conscience, or at least your
heart :

Perhaps you failed in your foreseeing skill,
For Swallows are unlucky birds to kill :
As for my sons, the family is blessed,
Whose every child is equal to the rest :

No Church reformed can boast a blameless
line ;

Such Martins build in yours, and more than
mine :

Or else an old fanatic author lies, 1890
Who summed their scandals up by centuries,
But through your parable I plainly see
The bloody laws, the crowd's barbarity ;

The sunshine that offends the purblind sight :

Had some their wishes, it would soon be night.

Mistake me not : the charge concerns not you :

Your sons are malcontents, but yet are true,
As far as non-resistance makes them so ;
But that's a word of neutral sense, you know,
A passive term, which no relief will bring,
But trims betwixt a rebel and a king." 1860

"Rest well assured," the Pardalis* replied,
"My sons would all support the regal side,
Though Heaven forbid the cause by battle
should be tried."

The matron answered with a loud Amen,
And thus pursued her argument again.

"If, as you say, and as I hope no less,
Your sons will practise what yourself profess,

What angry power prevents our present peace?

The Lion, studious of our common good,
Desires (and Kings' desires are ill withstood) 1870

To join our nations in a lasting love ;
The bars betwixt are easy to remove ;
For sanguinary laws were never made above.

If you condemn that prince of tyranny,
Whose mandate forced your Gallic friends to fly,

Make not a worse example of your own ;
Or cease to rail at causeless rigour shown,
And let the guiltless person throw the stone.

His blunted sword your suffering brotherhood

Have seldom felt ; he stops it short of blood : 1880

But you have ground the persecuting knife,
And set it to a razor-edge on life.

Cursed be the wit, which cruelty refines,
Or to his father's rod the scorpion joins ;
Your finger is more gross than the great monarch's toins.

* The Latin word for panther.

But you, perhaps, remove that bloody note,
And stick it on the first Reformers' coat.

Oh, let their crime in long oblivion sleep :
'Twas theirs indeed to make, 'tis yours to keep.

Unjust, or just, is all the question now ; 1890
'Tis plain, that not repealing you allow.

"To name the Test would put you in a rage ;

You charge not that on any former age,
But smile to think how innocent you stand,
Armed by a weapon put into your hand.
Yet still remember, that you wield a sword
Forged by your foes against your Sovereign Lord ;

Designed to hew the imperial cedar down,
Defraud succession, and disheir the crown.
To abhor the makers, and their laws approve, 2000

Is to hate traitors, and the treason love.
What means it else, which now your children say,

We made it not, nor will we take away?

"Suppose some great oppressor had, by slight

Of law, disseised your brother of his right,
Your common sire surrendering in a fright ;
Would you to that unrighteous title stand,
Left by the villain's will to heir the land ?
More just was Judas, who his Saviour sold ;
The sacrilegious bribe he could not hold, 2010
Nor hang in peace, before he rendered back the gold.

What more could you have done, than now you do,

Had Oates and Bedlow, and their plot been true?

Some specious reasons for those wrongs were found ;

The dire magicians threw their mists around,
And wise men walked as on enchanted ground.

But now, when Time has made the imposture plain,

(Late though he followed Truth, and limping held her train)

What new delusion charms your cheated eyes again?

The painted harlot might a while bewitch, 2020
But why the hag uncased, and all obscene
with itch?

"The first Reformers were a modest race;
Our peers possessed in peace their native
place;
And when rebellious arms o'eturned the
state,
They suffered only in the common fate:
But now the Sovereign mounts the regal
chair,
And mitred seats are full, yet David's bench
is bare.

Your answer is, they were not dispossessed;
They need but rub their metal on the Test
To prove their ore: 'twere well if gold
alone 2030

Were touched and tried on your discerning
stone;

But that unfaithful Test unfound will pass
The dross of Atheists, and sectarian
brass:

As if the experiment were made to hold
For base productions, and reject the gold.
Thus men ungodded may to places rise,
And sects may be preferred without disguise:
No danger to the Church or State from
these;

The Papist only has his writ of ease.*
No gainful office gives him the pretence 2040
To grind the subject, or defraud the prince.
Wrong conscience, or no conscience, may
deserve

To thrive, but ours alone is privileged to
sterve.

"Still thank yourselves, you cry; your
noble race

We banish not, but they forsake the place.
Our doors are open: true, but ere they
come,

You toss your 'censing Test, and fume the
room;

As if 'twere Toby's † rival to expel,
And fright the fiend who could not bear
the smell."

* By the Test Act transubstantiation was to be
abjured.

† Tobias. The story is in the Apocrypha.

To this the Panther sharply had re-
plied; 2050

But, having gained a verdict on her side,
She wisely gave the loser leave to chide;
Well satisfied to have the Butt and Peace,
And for the plaintiff's cause she cared the
less,

Because she sued *in formâ pauperis*;
Yet thought it decent something should be
said;

For secret guilt by silence is betrayed.
So neither granted all, nor much denied,
But answered with a yawning kind of pride:
"Methinks such terms of proffered peace
you bring, 2060

As once Æneas to the Italian king:
By long possession all the land is mine;
You strangers come with your intruding
line,

To share my sceptre, which you call to
join.

You plead like him an ancient pedigree,
And claim a peaceful seat by fate's decree.
In ready pomp your sacrificer stands,
To unite the Trojan and the Latin bands,
And, that the league more firmly may be
tied,

Demand the fair Lavinia for your bride. 2070
Thus plausibly you veil the intended wrong,
But still you bring your exiled gods along;
And will endeavour, in succeeding space,
Those household puppets on our hearths to
place.

Perhaps some barbarous laws have been
preferred;

I spake against the Test, but was not heard;
These to rescind, and peerage to restore,
My gracious Sovereign would my vote im-
plore:

I owe him much, but owe my conscience
more."

"Conscience is then your plea," replied
the dame, 2080

"Which, well informed, will ever be the
same.

But yours is much of theameleon hue,
To change the dye with every different
view.

When first the Lion * sat with awful sway,
Your conscience taught your duty to obey :
He might have had your Statutes and your
Test ;

No conscience but of subjects was professed.
He found your temper, and no farther tried,
But on that broken reed, your Church, relied.
In vain the sects assayed their utmost
art, 2090

With offered treasure to espouse their part ;
Their treasures were a bribe too mean to
move his heart.

But when, by long experience, you had
proved,

How far he could forgive, how well he loved ;
A goodness that excelled his godlike race,
And only short of Heaven's unbounded
grace ;

A flood of mercy that o'erflowed our isle,
Calm in the rise, and fruitful as the Nile ;
Forgetting whence our Egypt was supplied,
You thought your Sovereign bound to send
the tide ; 2100

Nor upward looked on that immortal
spring,

But vainly deemed, he durst not be a king :
Then Conscience, unrestrained by fear,
began

To stretch her limits, and extend the span ;
Did his indulgence as her gift dispose,
And made a wise alliance with her foes.
Can Conscience own the associating name,
And raise no blushes to conceal her shame ?
For sure she has been thought a bashful
dame.

But if the cause by battle should be
tried, 2110

You grant she must espouse the regal side :
Oh Proteus conscience, never to be tied !
What Phœbus from the Tripod shall dis-
close,

Which are, in last resort, your friends or
foes ?

Homer, who learnt the language of the sky,
The seeming Gordian knot would soon un-
tie ;

Immortal powers the term of Conscience
know,

But Interest is her name with men below."
" Conscience or Interest be 't, or both in
one,"

(The Panther answered in a surly tone) 2120
" The first commands me to maintain the
crown,

The last forbids to throw my barriers down.
Our penal laws no sons of yours admit,
Our Test excludes your tribe from benefit.
These are my banks your ocean to with-
stand,

Which proudly rising overlooks the land ;
And, once let in, with unresisted sway,
Would sweep the pastors and their flocks
away.

Think not my judgment leads me to com-
ply

With laws unjust, but hard necessity : 2130
Imperious need, which cannot be with-
stood,

Makes ill authentic, for a greater good.
Possess your soul with patience, and attend :
A more auspicious planet may ascend ;
Good fortune may present some happier
time,

With means to cancel my unwilling crime ;
(Unwilling, witness all ye Powers above)
To mend my errors, and redeem your love :
That little space you safely may allow ;
Your all-dispensing power protects you
now." 2140

" Hold," said the Hind, "'tis needless
to explain ;

You would postpone me to another reign ;
Till when, you are content to be unjust :
Your part is to possess, and mine to trust.
A fair exchange proposed of future chance,
For present profit and inheritance.

" Few words will serve to finish our dis-
pute ;

Who will not now repeal, would persecute.
To ripen green revenge your hopes attend,
Wishing that happier planet would as-
cend. 2150

For shame, let Conscience be your plea no
more :

To will hereafter, proves she might before ;
But she's a bawd to gain, and holds the
door.

" Your care about your banks infers a
fear

Of threatening floods and inundations near :
If so, a just reprise would only be
Of what the land usurpies upon the sea ;
And all your jealousies but serve to show
Your ground is, like your neighbour-nation,
low.

To intrench in what you grant unrighteous
laws, 2160

Is to distrust the justice of your cause ;
And argues that the true religion lies
In those weak adversaries you despise.

" Tyrannic force is that which least you
fear ;

The sound is frightful in a Christian's ear :
Avert it, Heaven ! nor let that plague be
sent

To us from the dispeopled continent.

" But piety commands me to refrain ;

Those prayers are needless in this mon-
arch's reign.

Behold ! how he protects your friends op-
pressed, 2170

Receives the banished,* succours the dis-
tressed :

Behold, for you may read an honest open
breast,

He stands in day-light, and disdains to
hide

An act, to which by honour he is tied,
A generous, laudable, and kingly pride.

Your Test he would repeal, his peers † re-
store ;

This when he says he means, he means no
more."

" Well," said the Panther, " I believe
him just,

And yet——"

" And yet, 'tis but because you must ;
You would be trusted, but you would not
trust." 2180

The Hind thus briefly ; and disdained to
enlarge,

On power of Kings, and their superior
charge

As Heaven's trustees before the people's
choice ;

Though sure the Panther did not much re-
joice

To hear those echoes given of her once
loyal voice.

The matron wooed her kindness to the
last,

But could not win ; her hour of grace was
passed.

Whom, thus persisting, when she could not
bring

To leave the Wolf, and to believe her King,
She gave her up, and fairly wished her
joy 2190

Of her late treaty with her new ally :

Which well she hoped would more success-
ful prove,

Than was the Pigeon's and the Buzzard's
love.

The Panther asked, what concord there
could be

Betwixt two kinds whose natures disagree ?
The dame replied, "'Tis sung in every
street,

The common chat of gossips when they
meet :

But, since unheard by you, 'tis worth your
while

To take a wholesome tale, though told in
homely style.

" A plain good man, ‡ whose name is
understood, 2200

(So few deserve the name of plain and good)
Of three fair lineal lordships stood possessed,

And lived, as reason was, upon the best.
Inured to hardships from his early youth,

Much had he done, and suffered for his truth :

* The Huguenots, banished from France by the revocation of the edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. James was "very kind to the refugees," Burnet tells us, and condemned the persecution of them, though the historian unfairly suggests "affectation" in the King's expression of that opinion.

† The Roman Catholic Peers were excluded from the House of Lords by the Test Act.

‡ The King, James II.

At land and sea, in many a doubtful fight,
Was never known a more adventurous knight,

Who oftener drew his sword, and always
for the right.

"As fortune would (his fortune came,
though late)

He took possession of his just estate : 2210
Nor racked his tenants with increase of rent ;
Nor lived too sparing, nor too largely
spent ;

But overlooked his hinds ; their pay was
just,

And ready, for he scorned to go on trust :
Slow to resolve, but in performance quick ;
So true, that he was awkward at a trick.
For little souls on little shifts rely,
And coward arts of mean expedients try ;
The noble mind will dare do anything but
lie.

False friends (his deadliest foes) could find
no way 2220

But shows of honest bluntness, to betray :
That unsuspected plainness he believed ;

He looked into himself, and was deceived.
Some lucky planet sure attends his birth,
Or Heaven would make a miracle on earth ;
For prosperous honesty is seldom seen

To bear so dead a weight, and yet to win.
It looks as fate with nature's law would
strive,

To show plain-dealing once an age may
thrive :

And, when so tough a frame she could not
bend, 2230

Exceeded her commission to befriend.

"This grateful man, as Heaven increased
his store,

Gave God again, and daily fed His poor.
His house with all convenience was pur-
veyed ;

The rest he found, but raised the fabric
where he prayed ;

And in that sacred place his beauteous wife *
Employed her happiest hours of holy life.

"Nor did their alms extend to those
alone,

Whom common faith more strictly made
their own ;

A sort of Doves† were housed too near
their hall, 2240

Who cross the proverb, and abound with
gall.

Though some, 'tis true, are passively inclined,
The greater part degenerate from their
kind ;

Voracious birds, that hotly bill and breed,
And largely drink, because on salt they
feed.

Small gain from them their bounteous
owner draws ;

Yet, bound by promise, he supports their
cause,

As corporations privileged by laws.

"That house which harbour to their
kind affords,

Was built, long since, God knows, for
better birds ; 2250

But fluttering there, they nestle near the
throne,

And lodge in habitations not their own,
By their high crops and corny gizzards
known.

Like Harpies, they could scent a plenteous
board,

Then to be sure they never failed their
lord :

The rest was form, and bare attendance
paid ;

They drunk, and eat, and grudgingly
obeyed.

The more they fed, they ravened still for
more ;

They drained from Dan, and left Beersheba
poor.

All this they had by law, and none re-
pined ; 2260

The preference was but due to Levi's kind :
But when some lay-preferment fell by
chance,

The Gourmands made it their inheritance.

* Mary Beatrice of Modena, the King's second
wife, a very devout Roman Catholic.

† The Clergy of the Church of England.

When once possessed they never quit their claim;
For then 'tis sanctified to Heaven's high name;
And hallowed thus, they cannot give consent,
The gift should be profaned by worldly management.

"Their flesh was never to the table served;
Though 'tis not thence inferred the birds were starved; 2270

But that their master did not like the food,
As rank, and breeding melancholy blood,*
Nor did it with his gracious nature suit,
E'en though they were not Doves, to persecute:

Yet he refused (nor could they take offence)
Their glutton kind should teach him abstinence.

Nor consecrated grain their wheat he thought,

Which, new from treading, in their bills they brought:

But left his hinds each in his private power,

That those who like the bran might leave the flour.

He for himself, and not for others chose, 2280
Nor would he be imposed on, nor impose;
But in their faces his devotion paid,
And sacrifice with solemn rites was made,
And sacred incense on his altars laid.

"Besides these jolly birds, whose crops impure

Repaid their commons with their salt-manure;

Another farm he had behind his house,
Not overstocked, but barely for his use:

Wherein his poor domestic poultry fed,†
And from his pious hands received their bread. 2290

Our pampered Pigeons, with malignant eyes,

Beheld these inmates, and their nurseries:

* See Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," on Diet.

† James's priests.

Though hard their fare, at evening, and at morn,

A cruse of water and an ear of corn;
Yet still they grudged that modicum, and thought

A sheaf in every single grain was brought.
Fain would they filch that little food away,
While unrestrained those happy gluttons prey.

And much they grieved to see so nigh their hall,

The bird that warned St. Peter of his fall; 2300

That he should raise his mitred crest on high,

And clap his wings, and call his family
To sacred rites; and vex the ethereal powers
With midnight matins at uncivil hours:

Nay more, his quiet neighbours should molest,

Just in the sweetness of their morning rest.
Beast of a bird, supinely when he might

Lie snug and sleep, to rise before the light!

What if his dull forefathers used that cry,
Could he not let a bad example die? 2310

The world was fallen into an easier way;
This age knew better than to fast and pray.

Good sense in sacred worship would appear
So to begin, as they might end the year.

Such feats in former times had wrought the falls

Of crowing Chanticleers in cloistered walls,
Expelled for this, and for their lands, they fled;

And sister Partlet, with her hooded head,‡
Was hooted hence, because she would not pray a-bed.

The way to win the restive world to God, 2320

Was to lay by the disciplining rod,
Unnatural fasts, and foreign forms of prayer:

Religion frights us with a mien severe.
'Tis prudence to reform her into ease,

And put her in undress to make her please!

‡ The nun or abbess.

A lively faith will bear aloft the mind,
And leave the luggage of good works be-
hind.

"Such doctrines in the Pigeon-house were
taught :

You need not ask how wondrously they
wrought ;

But sure the common cry was all for
these, 2380

Whose life and precepts both encouraged
ease.

Yet fearing those alluring baits might fail,
And holy deeds o'er all their arts prevail ;
(For vice, though frontless, and of hardened
face,

Is daunted at the sight of awful grace,)
An hideous figure of their foes they drew,
Nor lines, nor looks, nor shades, nor colours
true ;

And this grotesque design exposed to public
view.

One would have thought it an Egyptian
piece,

With garden-gods, and barking deities, 2340
More thick than Ptolemy has stuck the
skies.

All so perverse a draught, so far unlike,
It was no libel where it meant to strike.

Yet still the daubing pleased, and great and
small,

To view the monster, crowded Pigeon-
hall.

There Chanticleer was drawn upon his
knees

Adoring shrines, and stocks of sainted
trees ;

And by him, a misshapen, ugly race ;
The curse of God was seen on every face.

No Holland emblem could that malice
mend, 2380

But still the worse the look, the fitter for
a fiend.

"The master of the farm, displeased to
find

So much of rancour in so mild a kind,
Enquired into the cause, and came to know,
The Passive Church had struck the fore-
most blow ;

With groundless fears, and jealousies pos-
sessed,

As if this troublesome intruding guest
Would drive the birds of Venus from their
nest.

A deed his inborn equity abhorred ;
But Interest will not trust, though God
should plight His word. 2360

"A law, the source of many future harms,
Had banished all the poultry from the
farms,*

With loss of life, if any should be found
To crow or peck on this forbidden ground.
That bloody statute chiefly was designed
For Chanticleer the white, of clergy kind ;
But after-malice did not long forget
The lay that wore the robe and coronet.
For them, for their inferiors and allies,
Their foes a deadly Shibboleth devise : † 2370
By which unrighteously it was decreed,
That none to trust, or profit, should succeed,
Who would not swallow first a poisonous
wicked weed :

Or that, to which old Socrates was cursed,
Or henbane juice to swell them till they
burst.

"The patron (as in reason) thought it hard
To see this inquisition in his yard,
By which the Sovereign was of subjects' use
debarred.

All gentle means he tried, which might
withdraw

The effects of so unnatural a law : 2380

But still the Dove-house obstinately stood
Deaf to their own, and to their neighbours'
good ;

And which was worse, (if any worse could
be,)

Repented of their boasted loyalty :
Now made the champions of a cruel cause,
And drunk with fumes of popular applause ;
For those whom God to ruin has designed,
He fits for fate, and first destroys their
mind.

* The Penal Laws against the Romish priest-
hood.

† The Test Act, which demanded an oath abjur-
ing transubstantiation.

"New doubts indeed they daily strove to raise,
Suggested dangers, interposed delays : 2390
And emissary Pigeons had in store,
Such as the Meccan prophet used of yore,
To whisper counsels in their patron's ear ;
And veiled their false advice with zealous fear.

The master smiled to see them work in vain,
To wear him out, and make an idle reign :
He saw, but suffered their protractive arts,
And strove by mildness to reduce their hearts :

But they abused that grace to make allies,
And fondly closed with former enemies ; 2400
For fools are double fools, endeav'ring to be wise.

"After a grave consult what course were best,

One, more mature in folly than the rest,
Stood up, and told them, with his head aside,
That desperate cures must be to desperate ills applied :

And therefore, since their main impending fear

Was from the increasing race of Chanticleer,

Some potent bird of prey they ought to find,
A foe professed to him, and all his kind :
Some haggard Hawk, who had her eyrie nigh, 2410

Well pounced to fasten, and well winged to fly ;

One they might trust their common wrongs to wreak ;

The Musquet, and the Coystrel were too weak,

Too fierce the Falcon ; but, above the rest,
The noble Buzzard * ever pleased me best ;
Of small renown, 'tis true ; for, not to lie,

We call him but a Hawk by courtesy.
I know he haunts the Pigeon-house and Farm,

And more, in time of war, has done us harm :

But all his hate on trivial points depends ; 2420

Give up our forms, and we shall soon be friends.

For Pigeons' flesh he seems not much to care ;

Crammed Chickens are a more delicious fare.

On this high potentate, without delay,
I wish you would confer the sovereign sway :
Petition him to accept the government,
And let a splendid embassy be sent.

"This pithy speech prevailed, and all agreed,

Old enmities forgot, the Buzzard should succeed.

"Their welcome suit was granted soon as heard, 2430

His lodgings furnished, and a train prepared,

With B's upon their breast, appointed for his guard.

He came, and crowned with great solemnity,
'God save king Buzzard' was the general cry.

"A portly prince,† and goodly to the sight,
He seemed a son of Anak for his height :

Like those whom stature did to crowns prefer :

Black-browed and bluff, like Homer's Jupiter :

† This violent and cutting satire on Bishop Burnet, which approaches the very verge of downright and disgusting ribaldry, must be accounted for (I will not say apologised) by the bishop's having called Dryden a monster of impiety, for the obscenities, blasphemies, and falsehoods, with which he said our author's works abounded. Burnet's own character appears every day to be more and more approved and brightened by calm examination. His "History of his Own Times," allowing, perhaps, that it is written in too careless and familiar a style, yet abounds in most curious facts that otherwise would have been unknown, and this familiarity is pleasing. His "History of the Reformation" is surely a most valuable and important work, and one of the most decisive blows Popery ever received. His "Exposition of the Articles" is sensible, acute, and candid ; with a laudable endeavour to free them from some seeming absurdities and contradictions. And his "Short Account of Lord Rochester" a most useful, pious, and instructive little narrative.—Dr. J. WATSON.

* The Buzzard represents Bishop Burnet, the author of the "History of the Reformation."

Broad-backed, and brawny built for love's
delight ;

A prophet formed to make a female prose-
lyte. 2440

A theologian more by need than natural
bent ;

By breeding sharp, by nature confident.
Interest in all his actions was discerned ;
More learned than honest, more a wit than
learned :

Or forced by fear, or by his profit led,
Or both conjoined, his native clime he fled :
But brought the virtues of his heaven
along,*

A fair behaviour, and a flattering tongue.
And yet with all his arts he could not thrive ;
The most unlucky parasite alive. 2450

Loud praises to prepare his paths he sent,
And then himself pursued his compliment ;
But by reverse of fortune chased away,
His gifts no longer than their author stay :
He shakes the dust against the ungrateful
race,

And leaves the stench of ordures in the
place.

Oft has he flattered and blasphemed the
same ;

For in his rage he spares no Sovereign's
name :

The hero and the tyrant change their style
By the same measure that they frown or
smile. 2460

When well received by hospitable foes,
The kindness he returns, is to expose :
For courtesies, though undeserved and
great,

No gratitude in felon-minds beget ;
As tribute to his wit, the churl receives the
treat.

His praise of foes is venomously nice ;
So touched, it turns a virtue to a vice :
' A Greek, and bountiful, forewarns us
twice.'

Seven sacraments he wisely does disown,
Because he knows Confession stands for
one ; 2470

Where sins to sacred silence are conveyed,
And not for fear, or love, to be betrayed :

But he, uncalled, his patron to control, *
Divulged the secret whispers of his soul ;
Stood forth the accusing Satan of his
crimes,

And offered to the Moloch of the times.†
Prompt to assail, and careless of defence,
Invulnerable in his impudence,
He dares the world ; and eager of a
name,

He thrusts about, and justles into fame. 2480
Frontless, and satire-proof, he scours the
streets,

And runs an Indian-muck at all he meets.
So fond of loud report, that not to miss
Of being known (his last and utmost bliss)
He rather would be known for what he is.

" Such was, and is the Captain of the Test,
Though half his virtues are not here ex-
pressed :

The modesty of fame conceals the rest.
The spleenful Pigeons never could create
A prince more proper to revenge their
hate : 2490

Indeed, more proper to revenge, than save ;
A king, whom in His wrath the Almighty
gave :

For all the grace the landlord ‡ had allowed,
But made the Buzzard and the Pigeons
proud ;

Gave time to fix their friends, and to seduce
the crowd.

They long their fellow-subjects to intral,
Their patron's promise into question call,
And vainly think he meant to make them
lords of all.

" False fears their leaders failed not to
suggest,

As if the Doves were to be dispossessed ; 2500
Nor sighs, nor groans, nor goggling eyes
did want ;

For now the Pigeons too had learned to cant.

† This refers to Burnet's betraying the confi-
dential conversation of the Duke of Lauderdale
to the Committee of the House of Commons,
when he was questioned before them in 1675.
‡ James II.

* — his heaven along,] He was a Scotchman.

The house of prayer is stocked with large increase ;
 Nor doors, nor windows can contain the press :
 For birds of every feather fill the abode ;
 E'en Atheists out of envy own a God :
 And, reeking from the stews, adulterers come,
 Like Goths and Vandals to demolish Rome
 That Conscience, which to all their crimes was mute,
 Now calls aloud, and cries to persecute : 2510
 No rigour of the laws to be released,
 And much the less, because it was their Lord's request :
 They thought it great their Sovereign to control,
 And named their pride, nobility of soul.
 " 'Tis true, the Pigeons, and their prince elect,
 Were short of power, their purpose to effect :
 But with their quills did all the hurt they could,
 And cuffed the tender Chickens from their food :
 And much the Buzzard in their cause did stir,
 Though naming not the patron, to infer, 2520
 With all respect, he was a gross idolater.*
 " But when the imperial owner did espy,
 That thus they turned his grace to villainy,
 Not suffering wrath to discompose his mind,
 He strove a temper for the extremes to find,
 So to be just, as he might still be kind ;
 Then, all maturely weighed, pronounced a doom
 Of sacred strength for every age to come.

* On the 5th of November 1684, Burnet preached a sermon in the Rolls Chapel against Popery, in which he dropped some oblique reflections on the King. On this account it was ordered he should preach in that place no more, and he soon after found it necessary to withdraw to Holland. The King demanded him of the States as a traitor, but they refused to acquiesce. It is said £3000 was ordered to be paid by the Treasury to any person that could contrive to deliver him into the King's hands.—DERRICK.

By this the Doves their wealth and state possess,
 No rights infringed, but licence to oppress : 2530
 Such power have they as factious lawyers long
 To crowns ascribed, that Kings can do no wrong.
 But since his own domestic birds have tried
 The dire effects of their destructive pride,
 He deems that proof a measure to the rest,
 Concluding well within his kingly breast,
 His fowl of nature too unjustly were oppressed.
 He therefore makes all birds of every sect
 Free of his farm, with promise to respect
 Their several kinds alike, and equally protect. 2540
 His gracious edict the same franchise yields
 To all the wild increase of woods and fields,
 And who in rocks aloof, and who in steeples builds :
 To Crows the like impartial grace affords,
 And Choughs and Daws, and such republic birds :
 Secured with ample privilege to feed,
 Each has his district, and his bounds decreed :
 Combined in common interest with his own,
 But not to pass the Pigeons' Rubicon.
 " Here ends the reign of this pretended Dove ; 2550
 All prophecies accomplished from above,
 For Shiloh comes the sceptre to remove.
 Reduced from her imperial high abode,
 Like Dionysius to a private rod,
 The Passive Church, that with pretended grace
 Did her distinctive mark in duty place,
 Now touched, reviles her Maker to his face.
 What after happened is not hard to guess :
 The small beginnings had a large increase,
 And arts and wealth succeed (the secret spoils of peace.) 2560
 'Tis said, the Doves repented, though too late,
 Become the smiths of their own foolish fate :

Nor did their owner hasten their ill hour ;
But, sunk in credit, they decreased in
power :

Like snows in warmth that mildly pass away,
Dissolving in the silence of decay.

"The Buzzard, not content with equal
place,

Invites the feathered Nimrods of his race :
To hide the thinness of their flock from sight,
And all together make a seeming goodly
flight :

But each have separate interests of their own ;
Two Czars are one too many for a throne.

Nor can the usurper long abstain from food ;
Already he has tasted Pigeon's blood :

And may be tempted to his former fare,
When this indulgent lord shall late to
heaven repair.

Bare benting* times, and moulting months
may come,

* *Benting*] Seeking bents or culms—

"The pigeon never knoweth woe,
Until she doth a-benting go."

—Old Proverb.

Bents are coarse grasses, poor food for pigeons.
—Johnson's Dictionary, Latham's edition.

When, lagging late, they cannot reach
their home ;

Or rent in schism (for so their fate de-
crees)

Like the tumultuous college of the bees, 2880

They fight their quarrel, by themselves
oppressed ;

The tyrant smiles below, and waits the
falling feast."

Thus did the gentle Hind her fable
end,

Nor would the Panther blame it, nor com-
mend :

But, with affected yawnings at the close,
Seemed to require her natural repose :

For now the streaky light began to peep ;
And setting stars admonished both to
sleep.

The dame withdrew, and, wishing to her
guest

The peace of Heaven, betook herself to
rest. 2890

Ten thousand angels on her slumbers
wait,

With glorious visions of her future state.

UNDER

MR. MILTON'S PICTURE,

BEFORE HIS "PARADISE LOST."

1688.

THREE Poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed ;
The next in majesty ; in both the last.
The force of nature could no further go ;
To make a third, she joined the former two.

BRITANNIA REDIVIVA:

A POEM ON THE BIRTH OF THE PRINCE.*

JUNE 10, 1688.

"Dii Patrii Indigetes, et Romule, Vestaque Mater,
Quæ Tuscum Tiberim, et Romana Palatia servas,
Hunc saltem everso *Puerum* succurrere sæclo
Ne prohibe: satis jam pridem sanguine nostro
Laomedontæ luimus *Perjuria* Trojæ."—VIRG. *Georg.* i.

OUR vows are heard betimes! and Heaven
takes care

To grant, before we can conclude the
prayer:

Preventing † angels met it half the way,
And sent us back to praise, who came to
pray.

Just on the day, when the high-mounted
sun

Did farthest in his northern progress run,
He bended forward, and ev'n stretched the
sphere

Beyond the limits of the lengthened year,
To view a brighter sun in Britain born;
That was the business of his longest
morn; 10

The glorious object seen, 'twas time to turn.

Departing Spring could only stay to shed

Her bloomy beauties on the genial bed,
But left the manly Summer in her stead,
With timely fruit the longing land to cheer,
And to fulfil the promise of the year.

Betwixt two seasons comes the auspicious
heir,

This age to blossom, and the next to bear.
Last solemn Sabbath ‡ saw the Church
attend,

The Paraclete in fiery pomp descend; 20
But when his wondrous octave rolled
again,

He brought a royal infant § in his train.
So great a blessing to so good a king,
None but the Eternal Comforter could bring.

Or did the mighty Trinity conspire,
As once, in council to create our sire?
It seems as if they sent the new-born guest
To wait on the procession of their feast;
And on their sacred anniverse decreed
To stamp their image on the promised
seed. 30

* The unfortunate Prince James, known as the "old Pretender." That he was the true son of the King and Queen is now allowed. The most shameful rumours were set afloat by the Protestant party as to his being a supposititious child, brought in in a warming pan, &c. &c.

† Forestalling; to prevent, meant originally to "go before."

‡ Whitsunday.

§ The Prince was born on Trinity Sunday, June 10, 1688.

Three realms united, and on one bestowed,
An emblem of their mystic union showed :
The Mighty Trine the triple empire shared,
As every person would have one to guard.

Hail son of prayers ! by holy violence
Drawn down from Heaven ; but long be
banished thence,

And late to thy paternal skies retire :
To mend our crimes whole ages would
require,

To change the inveterate habit of our sins,
And finish what thy godlike sire begins. 40
Kind Heaven, to make us Englishmen
again,

No less can give us than a patriarch's
reign.

The sacred cradle to your charge receive,
Ye seraphs, and by turns the guard relieve ;
Thy father's angel, and thy father join,
To keep possession, and secure the line ;
But long defer the honours of thy fate :
Great may they be like his, like his be
late ;

That James this running century may view,
And give his son an auspice to the new. 50

Our wants exact at least that moderate
stay

For see the Dragon * winged on his way,
To watch the travail,† and devour the prey.
Or, if allusions may not rise so high,
Thus, when Alcides raised his infant cry,
The snakes besieged his young divinity :
But vainly with their forked tongues they
threat ;

For opposition makes a hero great.
To joyful succour all the good will run,
And Jove assert the godhead of his son. 60

Oh still repining at your present state,
Grudging yourselves the benefits of fate,
Look up, and read in characters of light
A blessing sent you in your own despite.
The manna falls, yet that celestial bread
Like Jews you munch, and murmur while
you feed.

* Alluding only to the Commonwealth party,
here and in other places of the poem.—Original
edition.

† Rev. xii. 4.—Original edition.

May not your fortune be like theirs, exiled,
Yet forty years to wander in the wild :
Or if it be, may Moses live at least,
To lead you to the verge of promised
rest. 70

Though poets are not prophets, to fore-
know

What plants will take the blight, and what
will grow,

By tracing Heaven his footsteps may be
found :

Behold ! how awfully He walks the round !
God is abroad, and, wondrous in His
ways,

The rise of empires, and their fall surveys ;
More (might I say) than with an usual eye,
He sees His bleeding Church in ruin lie,
And hears the souls of saints beneath His
altar cry.

Already has He lifted high the sign,‡ 80
Which crowned the conquering arms of
Constantine :

The moon § grows pale at that presaging
sight,

And half her train of stars have lost their
light.

Behold another Sylvester,|| to bless

The sacred standard, and secure success ;
Large of his treasures, of a soul so great,
As fills and crowds his universal seat.

Now view at home a second Constantine ;¶
(The former too was of the British line)**
Has not his healing balm your breaches
closed, 90

Whose exile many sought, and few op-
posed ?

Or, did not Heaven by its eternal doom
Permit those evils, that this good might
come ?

‡ The cross.—Original edition.

§ The crescent which the Turks bear for their
arms.—Original edition

|| The Pope in the time of Constantine the
Great : alluding to the present Pope.—Original
edition.

¶ King James the Second.—Original edition.

** Helena, the mother of Constantine the
Great, was of British birth, and Constantine is
said to have been born in Britain.

So manifest, that e'en the moon-eyed sects
See whom and what this Providence pro-
tects.

Methinks had we within our minds no more
Than that one shipwreck on the fatal Ore,*
That only thought may make us think
again,

What wonders God reserves for such a
reign.

To dream that chance his preservation
wrought, 100

Were to think Noah was preserved for
nought;

Or the surviving eight were not designed
To people earth, and to restore their kind.

When humbly on the royal babe we gaze,
The manly lines of a majestic face
Give awful joy : 'tis paradise to look

On the fair frontispiece of Nature's book :
If the first opening page so charms the
sight,

Think how the unfolded volume will de-
light !

See how the venerable infant lies 110
In early pomp ; how through the mother's
eyes

The father's soul, with an undaunted view,
Looks out, and takes our homage as his
due.

See on his future subjects how he smiles,
Nor meanly flatters, nor with craft beguiles ;
But with an open face, as on his throne,
Assures our birthrights, and assumes his
own.

Born in broad daylight, that the un-
grateful rout

May find no room for a remaining doubt ;
Truth, which itself is light, does darkness
shun, 120

And the true eaglet safely dares the sun.

† Fain would the fiends have made a
dubious birth,

Loth to confess the Godhead clothed in
earth ;

But sickened, after all their baffled lies,

To find an heir apparent of the skies :

Abandoned to despair, still may they
grudge,

And, owning not the Saviour, prove the Judge.

‡ Not great Æneas stood in plainer day,
When, the dark mantling mist dissolved
away,

He to the Tyrians showed his sudden
face, 130

Shining with all his goddess mother's
grace :

For she herself had made his countenance
bright,

Breathed honour on his eyes, and her own
purple light.

If our victorious Edward,§ as they say,
Gave Wales a prince on that propitious day,

Why may not years revolving with his fate
Produce his like, but with a longer date ?

One, who may carry to a distant shore
The terror that his famed forefather bore.

But why should James or his young hero
stay 140

For slight presages of a name or day ?
We need no Edward's fortune to adorn

That happy moment when our prince was
born :

Our prince adorns his day, and ages hence
Shall wish his birth-day for some future
prince.

|| Great Michael, prince of all the
ethereal hosts,

And whate'er inborn saints our Britain
boasts ;

And thou,¶ the adopted patron of our isle,
With cheerful aspects on this infant smile :

The pledge of Heaven, which, dropping
from above, 150

Secures our bliss, and reconciles His love.

* The Lemmon ore.—Original edition. The sandbank, on which the Duke of York was nearly lost in 1682, on his voyage to Scotland, is known by the name of Lemmon Ore.

† Alluding to the temptations in the wilderness.—Original edition.

‡ Virg. *Æneid*. i.—Original edition.

§ Edward the Black Prince, born on Trinity Sunday.—Original edition.

|| The motto of the poem explained.—Original edition.

¶ St. George.—Original edition.

Enough of ills our dire rebellion wrought,
When, to the dregs, we drank the bitter
draught;

Then airy atoms did in plagues conspire,
Nor did the avenging angel yet retire,
But purged our still increasing crimes with
fire.

Then perjured Plots, the still impending
Test,

And worse—but charity conceals the rest :
Here stop the current of the sanguine
flood ;

Require not, gracious God, Thy martyrs'
blood ;

But let their dying pangs, their living toil,
Spread a rich harvest through their native
soil :

A harvest ripening for another reign,
Of which this royal babe may reap the grain.

Enough of early saints one womb has
given ;

Enough increased the family of heaven :
Let them for his and our atonement go ;
And reigning blest above, leave him to rule
below.

Enough already has the year foreslowed
His wonted course, the sea has over-
flowed,

The meads were floated with a weeping
spring,

And frightened birds in woods forgot to
sing :

The strong-limbed steed beneath his
harness faints,

And the same shivering sweat his lord
attains.

When will the minister of wrath give o'er ?
Behold him, at Araunah's* threshing-
floor :

He stops, and seems to sheathe his flaming
brand,

Pleased with burnt incense from our David's
hand.

David has bought the Jebusite's abode,
And raised an altar to the living God.

Heaven, to reward him, makes his joys
sincere ;

No future ills nor accidents appear,
To sully and pollute the sacred infant's
year.

Five months to discord and debate were
given :

He sanctifies the yet remaining seven.
Sabbath of months ! henceforth in him be
blest,

And prelude to the realm's perpetual rest !
Let his baptismal drops for us atone ;
Lustrations for offences † not his own.

Let Conscience, which is Interest ill dis-
guised,

In the same font be cleansed, and all the
land baptized.

‡ Unnamed as yet ; at least unknown to
fame :

Is there a strife in heaven about his name ?
Where every famous predecessor vies,
And makes a faction for it in the skies ?

Or must it be reserved to thought alone ?
Such was the sacred Tetragrammaton.§

Things worthy silence must not be revealed :
Thus the true name of Rome was kept
concealed,

To shun the spells and sorceries of those 200
Who durst her infant Majesty oppose.

But when his tender strength in time shall
rise

To dare ill tongues, and fascinating eyes ;
This isle, which hides the little thunderer's
fame,

Shall be too narrow to contain his name :
The artillery of heaven shall make him
known ;

|| Crete could not hold the god, when Jove
was grown.

† Original sin.—Original edition.

‡ The prince christened, but not named.—
Original edition.

§ Jehovah, or the name of God, unlawful to be
pronounced by the Jews.—Original edition.
Some authors say that the true name of Rome
was kept a secret : " Ne hostes incantamentis
deos elicerent."—Original edition.

|| Candie, where Jupiter was born and bred
secretly.—Original edition.

* Alluding to the passage in 1 Kings xxiv. 20.—
Original edition. It should be 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.

As Jove's increase,* who from his brain
 was born,
 Whom arms and arts did equally adorn,
 Free of the breast was bred, whose milky
 taste 216
 Minerva's name to Venus had debased ;
 So this imperial babe rejects the food †
 That mixes monarch's with plebeian blood :
 Food that his inborn courage might control,
 Extinguish all the father in his soul,
 And, for his Estian race, and Saxon strain,
 Might reproduce some second Richard's
 reign.
 Mildness he shares from both his parents'
 blood :
 But kings too tame are despicably good :
 Be this the mixture of this regal child, 220
 By nature manly, but by virtue mild.
 Thus far the furious transport of the
 news
 Had to prophetic madness fired the Muse ;
 Madness ungovernable, uninspired,
 Swift to foretell whatever she desired.
 Was it for me the dark abyss to tread,
 And read the book which angels cannot
 read ?
 How was I punished, when the sudden
 blast, ‡
 The face of heaven, and our young sun
 o'ercast !
 Fame, the swift ill, increasing as she
 rolled, 230
 Disease, despair, and death, at three re-
 prises told :
 At three insulting strides she stalked the
 town,
 And, like contagion, struck the loyal
 down.
 Down fell the winnowed wheat ; but
 mounted high,
 The whirlwind bore the chaff, and hid the
 sky,
 Here black rebellion shooting from below,

(As earth's gigantic brood § by moments
 grow)
 And here the sons of God are petrified
 with woe :
 An apoplex of grief : so low were driven
 The saints, as hardly to defend their
 heaven. 240
 As, when pent vapours run their hollow
 round,
 Earthquakes, which are convulsions of the
 ground,
 Break bellowing forth, and no confinement
 brook,
 Till the third settles what the former
 shook ;
 Such heavings had our souls ; till, slow and
 late,
 Our life with his returned, and faith pre-
 vailed on fate.
 By prayers the mighty blessing was implored,
 To prayers was granted, and by prayers
 restored.
 So ere the Shunamite || a son conceived,
 The prophet promised, and the wife be-
 lieved. 250
 A son was sent, the son so much desired ;
 But soon upon the mother's knees expired.
 The troubled Seer approached the mournful
 door,
 Ran, prayed, and sent his pastoral staff
 before,
 Then stretched his limbs upon the child,
 and mourned,
 Till warmth, and breath, and a new soul
 returned,
 Thus Mercy stretches out her hand, and
 saves
 Desponding Peter sinking in the waves.
 As when a sudden storm of hail and rain
 Beats to the ground the yet unbearded
 grain, 260
 Think not the hopes of harvest are destroyed
 On the flat field, and on the naked void ;

* Pallas, or Minerva, said by the poets to have
 been bred up by hand.—Original edition.

† The prince was brought up by hand.

‡ The sudden false report of the prince's death.
 —Original edition.

§ Those giants are feigned to have grown
 fifteen ells every day.—Original edition.

|| In 2 Kings iv.—Original edition.

The light, unloaded stem, from tempest freed,
Will raise the youthful honours of his head ;
And, soon restored by native vigour, bear
The timely product of the bounteous year.

Nor yet conclude all fiery trials past :
For Heaven will exercise us to the last ;
Sometimes will check us in our full career,
With doubtful blessings, and with mingled
fear : 270

That, still depending on his daily grace,
His every mercy for an alms may pass ;
With sparing hands will diet us to good,
Preventing surfeits of our pampered blood.
So feeds the mother-bird her craving young
With little morsels, and delays them long.

True, this last blessing was a royal feast ;
But, where's the wedding-garment on the
guest ?

Our manners, as religion were a dream,
Are such as teach the nations to blas-
pheme. 280

In lusts we wallow, and with pride we swell,
And injuries with injuries repel ;

Prompt to revenge, not daring to forgive,
Our lives unteach the doctrine we believe.
Thus Israel sinned, impenitently hard,
And vainly thought the present ark * their
guard ;

But when the haughty Philistines appear,
They fled, abandoned to their foes and
fear ;

Their God was absent, though His ark was
there.

Ah ! lest our crimes should snatch this
pledge away, 290

And make our joys the blessings of a day †
For we have sinned him hence, and that
he lives,

God to His promise, not our practice gives.
Our crimes would soon weigh down the
guilty scale,

But James, and Mary, and the Church
prevail.

Nor Amalek † can rout the chosen bands,
While Hur and Aaron hold up Moses' hands.

By living well, he secures his days,
Moderate in hopes, and humble in our ways.
No force the free-born spirit can con-
strain, 300

But charity, and great examples gain.
Forgiveness is our thanks for such a day,
'Tis god-like God in His own coin to pay.
But you, propitious queen, translated
here,

From your mild heaven, to rule our rugged
sphere,

Beyond the sunny walks, and circling year :
You, who your native climate have bereft
Of all the virtues, and the vices left ;

Whom piety and beauty make their boast,
Though beautiful is well in pious lost ; 310

So lost, as star-light is dissolved away,
And melts into the brightness of the day ;

Or gold about the regal diadem,
Lost to improve the lustre of the gem.

What can we add to your triumphant day ?
Let the great gift the beauteous giver pay.

For should our thanks awake the rising sun,
And lengthen, as his latest shadows run,

That, tho' the longest day, would soon, too
soon be done.

Let angels' voices with their harps con-
spire, 320

But keep the auspicious infant from the
quire ;

Late let him sing above, and let us know
No sweeter music than his cries below.

Nor can I wish to you, great monarch,
more

'Than such an annual income to your store ;
The day which gave this Unit, did not
shine

For a less omen, than to fill the Trine.
After a Prince, an Admiral beget ;

The Royal Sovereign wants an anchor yet.
Our isle has younger titles still in store, 330

And when the exhausted land can yield no
more,

Your line can force them from a foreign
shore.

The name of Great your martial mind
will suit ;

But justice is your darling attribute :

* 1 Sam. iv. 10.—Original edition.

† Exod. xvii. 8.—Original edition.

Of all the Greeks, 'twas but one hero's * due,
And, in him, Plutarch prophesied of you.
A prince's favours but on few can fall,
But justice is a virtue shared by all.

Some kings the name of conquerors have
assumed,

Some to be great, some to be gods pre-
sumed ;

But boundless power, and arbitrary lust,
Made tyrants still abhor the name of just ;
They shunned the praise this god-like virtue
gives,

And feared a title that reproached their
lives.

The Power, from which all kings derive
their state,
Whom they pretend, at least, to imitate,

* Aristides. See his life in Plutarch.—Original
edition.

Is equal both to punish and reward ;
For few would love their God, unless they
feared.

Resistless force and immortality
Make but a lame, imperfect, deity ; 350
Tempests have force unbounded to destroy,
And deathless being ev'n the damned enjoy ;
And yet Heaven's attributes, both last and
first,

One without life, and one with life accurst :
But justice is Heaven's self, so strictly He,
That, could it fail, the Godhead could not
be.

This virtue is your own ; but life and state
Are one to fortune subject, one to fate :
Equal to all, you justly frown or smile ;
Nor hopes nor fears your steady hand be-
guile ;

Yourselves our balance hold, the world's, 360
our isle.

EPISTLES AND COMPLIMENTARY
ADDRESSES.

NOTE.

These Epistles date from 1650 to the end of Dryden's life. They are very interesting, as presenting us with a picture of the times and of his friends. They begin with his second published Poem, addressed to his young friend John Hoddesdon; and ending with his Epistle to his cousin, John Dryden—published in 1670. The Addresses were undoubtedly meant to be prefixed to the publications of friends, according to the fashion of the times, and are, of course, highly laudatory. The Epistle to Congreve the Dramatist is very touching, and the Letter to Sir George Etherege playful and amusing. Sir George was a wit, a courtier, and a writer of comedies, and, at the time Dryden wrote to him, was the English Minister at the Diet of Ratisbon. Both these last-named epistles are charmingly poetical and interesting.

EPISTLES AND COMPLIMENTARY ADDRESSES.

TO HIS FRIEND
JOHN HODDES DON,

ON HIS DIVINE EPIGRAMS.*

THOU hast inspired me with thy soul, and I
Who ne'er before could ken of Poetry,
Am grown so good proficient, I can lend
A line in commendation of my friend.
Yet 'tis but of the second hand; if ought
There be in this, 'tis from thy fancy brought.
Good thief, who darest, Prometheus-like,
aspire,
And fill thy poems with celestial fire:
Enlivened by these sparks divine, their rays
Add a bright lustre to thy crown of bays. 10
Young eaglet, who thy nest thus soon for-
sook,
So lofty and divine a course hast took
As all admire, before the down begin
To peep, as yet, upon thy smoother chin;
And, making heaven thy aim, hast had the
grace
To look the Sun of Righteousness i' the face.
What may we hope, if thou goest on thus
fast,
Scriptures at first; enthusiasms at last!
Thou hast commenced, betimes, a saint;
go on,
Mingling diviner streams with Helicon; 20
That they who view what Epigrams here be,
May learn to make like, in just praise of thee.

* Mr. Hoddesdon's poems were published in 8vo, 1650, under the title of "Sion and Parnassus; or, Epigrams on several texts of the Old and New Testament." He and Dryden were of about the same age. Dryden was eighteen when these lines were written.

Reader, I've done, nor longer will with-
hold
Thy greedy eyes; looking on this pure gold
Thou'lt know adulterate copper, which,
like this,
Will only serve to be a foil to his.

TO MY HONOURED FRIEND
SIR ROBERT HOWARD,†

ON HIS EXCELLENT POEMS.

As there is music uninformed by art
In those wild notes, which, with a merry
heart,
The birds in unfrequented shades express,
Who, better taught at home, yet please us
less,

† Sir Robert Howard was a younger son of Thomas Earl of Berkshire, and brother to Dryden's wife. He studied for some time in Magdalene College. He suffered many oppressions on account of his loyalty, and was one of the few of King Charles the Second's friends, whom that monarch did not forget.

Several of his pieces, both in prose and verse, were published at different times; among which are "The Duel of the Stags," then a celebrated poem; the comedy of "The Blind Lady;" "The Committee; or, the Faithful Irishman;" "The Great Favourite; or, the Duke of Lerma;" "The Indian Queen," a tragedy, written in conjunction with Dryden; "The Surprisal," a tragi-comedy; and "The Vestal Virgin; or, the Roman Ladies," a tragedy. The last had two different conclusions, one tragical, and the other, to use the author's own words, "comical." The last five plays were collected together, and published by Tonson in a small 12mo volume in 1722.—DERRICK.

So in your verse a native sweetness dwells,
Which shames composure, and its art excels.
Singing no more can your soft numbers
grace,

Than paint add charms unto a beauteous
face.

Yet as, when mighty rivers gently creep,
Their even calmness does suppose them
deep, 10

Such is your muse: no metaphor swelled
high

With dangerous boldness lifts her to the sky:
Those mounting fancies, when they fall
again,

Show sand and dirt at bottom do remain.
So firm a strength, and yet withal so sweet,
Did never but in Samson's riddle meet.

'Tis strange each line so great a weight
should bear,

And yet no sign of toil, no sweat appear.
Either your art hides art, as stoics feign
Then least to feel, when most they suffer
pain; 20

And we, dull souls, admire, but cannot see
What hidden springs within the engine be;
Or 'tis some happiness that still pursues
Each act and motion of your graceful muse.
Or is it fortune's work, that in your head
The curious net that is for fancies spread,*
Lets through its meshes every meaner
thought,

While rich ideas there are only caught?
Sure that's not all: this is a piece too fair
To be the child of chance, and not of care. 30
No atoms casually together hurled
Could e'er produce so beautiful a world.
Nor dare I such a doctrine here admit,
As would destroy the providence of wit,
'Tis your strong genius then which does not
feel

Those weights, would make a weaker spirit
reel.

To carry weight, and run so lightly too,
Is what alone your Pegasus can do.

Great Hercules himself could ne'er do more,
Than not to feel those heavens and gods
he bore. 40

Your easier odes, which for delight were
penned,

Yet our instruction made their second end:
We're both enriched and pleased, like them
that woo

At once a beauty, and a fortune too.
Of moral knowledge Poesy was queen,
And still she might, had wanton wits not
been;

Who, like ill guardians, lived themselves at
large,

And, not content with that, debauched
their charge.

Like some brave captain, your successful pen
Restores the exiled to her crown again: 50
And gives us hope, that having seen the
days

When nothing flourished but fanatic bays,
All will at length in this opinion rest,
"A sober prince's government is best."

This is not all; your art the way has found
To make improvement of the richest ground,
That soil which those immortal laurels bore,
That once the sacred Maro's temples wore.
Elisa's † griefs are so expressed by you,
They are too eloquent to have been true. 60
Had she so spoke, Æneas had obeyed
What Dido, rather than what Jove had said.

If funeral rites can give a ghost repose,
Your muse so justly has discharged those,
Elisa's shade may now its wand'ring cease,
And claim a title to the fields of peace.
But if Æneas be obliged, no less
Your kindness great Achilles doth confess;
Who, dressed by Statius in too bold a look,
Did ill become those virgin robes he
took. 70

To understand how much we owe to you,
We must your numbers, with your author's
view:

* "Rete Mirabile."—DRYDEN. The network of blood-vessels at the base of the brain of quadrupeds.

† Sir Robert had translated the Fourth Book of the "Æneid" in the volume of poems to which Dryden's panegyric was attached. Elisa is another name for Dido, as most readers will know.

Then we shall see his work was lamely
rough,

Each figure stiff, as if designed in buff:
His colours laid so thick on every place,
As only showed the paint, but hid the face.
But as in perspective we beauties see,
Which in the glass, not in the picture, be;
To here our sight obligingly mistakes
That wealth, which his your bounty only
makes.

Thus vulgar dishes are, by cooks disguised,
More for their dressing, than their substance prized.

Your curious notes so search into that age,
When all was fable but the sacred page,
That, since in that dark night we needs
must stray,

We are at least misled in pleasant way.
But what we most admire, your verse no
less

The prophet than the poet doth confess.
Ere our weak eyes discerned the doubtful
streak

Of light, you saw great Charles his morn-
ing break:

So skilful seamen ken the land from far,
Which shows like mist to the dull passenger.
To Charles your muse first pays her dute-
ous love,

As still the ancients did begin from Jove.
With Monk you end, whose name pre-
served shall be,

As Rome recorded Rufus' * memory,
Who thought it greater honour to obey
His country's interest, than the world to
sway.

But to write worthy things of worthy men,
Is the peculiar talent of your pen:

Yet let me take your mantle up, and I
Will venture in your right to prophesy.

"This work, by merit first of fame secure,
Is likewise happy in its geniture:

For, since 'tis born when Charles ascends
the throne,

It shares at once his fortune and its own."

* Virginius Rufus. He twice refused to be made emperor; once in Nero's time, and again after Otho's death.

TO MY HONOURED FRIEND

DR. CHARLETON,†

ON HIS LEARNED AND USEFUL WORKS; BUT
MORE PARTICULARLY HIS TREATISE OF
STONEHENGE, BY HIM RESTORED TO THE
TRUE FOUNDERS.

THE longest tyranny that ever swayed,
Was that wherein our ancestors betrayed
Their free-born reason to the Stagirite,
And made his torch their universal light.
So truth, while only one supplied the
state,

Grew scarce, and dear, and yet sophisticate.
Until 'twas bought, like emp'ric wares, or
charms,

Hard words sealed up with Aristotle's arms.
Columbus was the first that shook his
throne,

And found a temperate in a torrid zone: 10
The feverish air fanned by a cooling breeze,
The fruitful vales set round with shady
trees;

And guiltless men, who danced away their
time,
Fresh as their groves, and happy as their
clime.

Had we still paid that homage to a name
Which only God and nature justly claim,
The western seas had been our utmost
bound,

Where poets still might dream the sun was
drowned:

And all the stars that shine in southern
skies,

Had been admired by none but savage
eyes.

Among the asserters of free reason's claim,
The English are not the least in worth or
fame.

† Dr. Charleton was Physician in Ordinary to Charles II. The book for which this epistle was composed was called "Stonehenge restored to the Danes," and was written to prove that Stonehenge was a Danish monument. But antiquarians disputed the suggestion; and, in fact, Stonehenge had been mentioned by Nennius 300 years before the Danes came to England.

The world to Bacon does not only owe
 Its present knowledge, but its future too.
 Gilbert * shall live, till loadstones cease to
 draw,
 Or British fleets the boundless ocean awe ;
 And noble Boyle † not less in nature seen,
 Than his great brother read in states and
 men.
 The circling streams, once thought but
 pools, of blood
 (Whether life's fuel, or the body's food) 30
 From dark oblivion Harvey's name shall
 save ;
 While Ent ‡ keeps all the honour that he
 gave.
 Nor are you, learned friend, the least re-
 nowned ;
 Whose fame, not circumscribed with English
 ground,
 Flies like the nimble journeys of the light ;
 And is, like that, unspent too in its flight.
 Whatever truths have been, by art or
 chance,
 Redeemed from error, or from ignorance,
 Thin in their authors, like rich veins of ore,
 Your works unite, and still discover more. 40
 Such is the healing virtue of your pen,
 To perfect cures on books, as well as
 men.
 Nor is this work the least : you well may
 give
 To men new vigour, who make stones to
 live.
 Through you, the Danes, their short
 dominion lost,
 A longer conquest than the Saxons boast.
 Stonehenge, once thought a temple, you
 have found
 A throne, where kings, our earthly gods,
 were crowned ;

Where by their wond'ring subjects they
 were seen,
 Joyed with their stature, and their princely
 mien. 50
 Our sovereign here above the rest might
 stand,
 And here be chose again to rule the land.
 These ruins sheltered once his sacred
 head, §
 When he from Wor'ster's fatal battle fled ;
 Watched by the genius of this royal
 place,
 And mighty visions of the Danish race.
 His refuge then was for a temple shown :
 But, he restored, 'tis now become a throne.

TO

THE LADY CASTLEMAINE,||

UPON HER ENCOURAGING HIS FIRST PLAY. ¶

As seamen, shipwrecked on some happy
 shore,
 Discover wealth in lands unknown before ;
 And, what their art had laboured long in
 vain,
 By their misfortunes happily obtain :
 So my much-envied Muse, by storms long
 tossed,
 Is thrown upon your hospitable coast,
 And finds more favour by her ill success,
 Than she could hope for by her happiness.
 Once Cato's virtue did the gods oppose ;
 While they the victor, he the vanquished
 chose : 10

§ Charles II., during his perilous journey to
 Shoreham, took refuge for a day in the Circle
 of Stonehenge. See the *Boscobel Tracts*.

|| Lady Castlemaine was the daughter of Villiers,
 Lord Grandison, who fell fighting for Charles I.
 in the battle of Edgehill. She married Roger
 Palmer, and became one of the King's mis-
 tresses. Her husband was created Earl of Castle-
 maine, and she ultimately received the title of
 Duchess of Cleveland.

¶ Dryden's first play, "The Wild Gallant,"
 was unsuccessful when acted, but Lady Castle-
 maine approved of it, and patronised the poet.

* Dr. William Gilbert was physician to Queen
 Elizabeth and King James I. He published a
 dissertation on the loadstone.

† The Hon. Robert Boyle, seventh son of the
 Earl of Cork and Burlington, born 1677, was the
 founder of the Royal Society. His brother,
 Lord Orrery, wrote eight tragedies in rhyme,
 long forgotten.

‡ Sir George Ent, a celebrated physician.

But you have done what Cato could not do,
To choose the vanquished, and restore him
too.

Let others still triumph, and gain their cause
By their deserts, or by the world's applause ;
Let merit crowns, and justice laurels give,
But let me happy by your pity live.
True poets empty fame and praise despise,
Fame is the trumpet, but your smile the
prize.

You sit above, and see vain men below
Contend for what you only can bestow : 20
But those great actions others do by chance,
Are, like your beauty, your inheritance :
So great a soul, such sweetness joined in
one,

Could only spring from noble Grandison.
You, like the stars, not by reflection bright,
Are born to your own heaven, and your
own light ;

Like them are good, but from a nobler
cause,

From your own knowledge, not from
nature's laws.

Your power you never use, but for defence,
To guard your own, or others' innocence ; 30
Your foes are such, as they, not you, have
made,

And virtue may repel, though not invade.
Such courage did the ancient heroes show,
Who, when they might prevent, would
wait the blow :

With such assurance as they meant to say,
We will o'ercome, but scorn the safest way.
What further fear of danger can there be ?
Beauty, which captives all things, sets me
free.

Posterity will judge by my success,
I had the Grecian poet's happiness, 40
Who, waiving plots, found out a better way ;
Some god descended, and preserved the
play.

When first the triumphs of your sex were
sung

By those old poets, Beauty was but young,
And few admired the native red and white,
Till poets dressed them up to charm the
sight ;

So Beauty took on trust, and did engage
For sums of praises till she came to age,
But this long-growing debt to poetry
You justly, madam, have discharged to
me, 50
When your applause and favour did in-
fuse
New life to my condemned and dying Muse.

TO M^R. LEE,*

ON HIS "ALEXANDER."

THE blast of common censure could I fear,
Before your play my name should not ap-
pear ;

For 'twill be thought, and with some colour
too,

I pay the bribe I first received from you ;
That mutual vouchers for our fame we
stand,

And play the game into each other's hand ;
And as cheap pen'orths to ourselves afford,
As Bessus and the brothers of the sword.†
Such libels private men may well endure,
When states and kings themselves are not
secure : 10

For ill men, conscious of their inward guilt,
Think the best actions on by-ends are built,
And yet my silence had not 'scaped their
spite ;

Then, "envy had not suffered me to write ;"
For, since I could not ignorance pretend,
Such worth I must or envy or commend.
So many candidates there stand for wit,
A place at court is scarce so hard to get :
In vain they crowd each other at the door ;
For e'en reversions are all begged before ; 20

* Nathaniel Lee, a dramatic writer of some note in Dryden's day. He had genius, but his poetry was full of rant and bombast. He went mad, and was confined in Bedlam for some years. He died in consequence of a drunken frolic. "The Rival Queens, or Alexander," is the only play of his now remembered.

† Characters in "King and No King," a play of Beaumont and Fletcher's.

Desert, how known soe'er, is long delayed ;
And then, too, fools and knaves are better
paid.

Yet, as some actions bear so great a name,
That courts themselves are just, for fear of
shame ;

So has the mighty merit of your play
Extorted praise, and forced itself a way.
'Tis here as 'tis at sea ; who farthest goes,
Or dares the most, makes all the rest his
foes.

Yet when some virtue much outgrows the
rest,

It shoots too fast, and high, to be op-
pressed ;

As his heroic worth struck envy dumb,
Who took the Dutchman, and who cut the
boom.

Such praise is yours, while you the passions
move,

That 'tis no longer feigned, 'tis real love,
Where nature triumphs over wretched art ;
We only warm the head, but you the heart.
Always you warm ; and if the rising year,
As in hot regions, brings the sun too near,
'Tis but to make your fragrant spices blow,
Which in our colder climates will not
grow.

They only think you animate your theme
With too much fire, who are themselves
all phlegm.

Prizes would be for lags of slowest pace,
Were cripples made the judges of the race.
Despise those drones, who praise, while
they accuse

The too much vigour of your youthful
Muse.

That humble style which they their virtue
make,

Is in your power ; you need but stoop and
take.

Your beauteous images must be allowed
By all, but some vile poets of the crowd.

But how should any sign-post dauber know
The worth of Titian or of Angelo ?

Hard features every bungler can command ;
To draw true beauty shows a master's
hand.

TO

THE EARL OF ROSCOMMON,

ON HIS EXCELLENT ESSAY ON TRANSLATED
VERSE.

WHETHER the fruitful Nile, or Tyrian shore,
The seeds of arts and infant science bore,
'Tis sure the noble plant, translated first,
Advanced its head in Grecian gardens
nursed.

The Grecians added verse : their tuneful
tongue

Made nature first, and nature's God their
song.

Nor stopped translation here ; for conquer-
ing Rome,

With Grecian spoils, brought Grecian
numbers home ;

Enriched by those Athenian Muses more,
Than all the vanquished world could yield
before.

Till barbarous nations, and more barbar-
ous times,

Debased the majesty of verse to rhymes ; *
Thoserude at first : a kind of hobbling prose,

That limped along, and tinkled in the close.
But Italy, reviving from the trance

Of Vandal, Goth, and Monkish ignorance,
With pauses, cadence, and well-vowelled
words,

And all the graces a good ear affords,
Made rhyme an art, and Dante's polished
page†

Restored a silver, not a golden age. 20
Then Petrarch followed, and in him we see,
What rhyme improved in all its height can
be :

* The songs of the Roman people during the Saturnalia were in rhyme, as were the acclamations of the soldiers.

† — [Dante's polished page] There is a very ancient Italian poem, entitled, "Aspramonte," containing an account of the war of King Guarnieri and Agolante against Rome and Charlemagne ; which, from the circumstance of the style being a mixture of the Tuscan with other Italian dialects, appears to be prior to Dante. There was an edition of it at Venice, 1615. It is become extremely rare.—Dr. J. WARTON.

At best a pleasing sound, and fair barbarity.
The French pursued their steps; and Britain,
last,

In manly sweetness all the rest surpassed.
The wit of Greece, the gravity of Rome,
Appear exalted in the British loom :
The Muses empire is restored again,
In Charles his reign, and by Roscommon's
pen.

Yet modestly he does his work survey, 30
And calls a finished Poem an Essay :
For all the needful rules are scattered here ;
Truth smoothly told, and pleasantly severe ;
So well is art disguised, for nature to appear.
Nor need those rules to give translation
light ;

His own example is a flame so bright,
That he who but arrives to copy well,
Unguided will advance, unknowing will
excel.

Scarce his own Horace could such rules
ordain,

Or his own Virgil sing a nobler strain. 40
How much in him may rising Ireland boast,
How much in gaining him has Britain lost !
Their island in revenge has ours reclaimed ;
The more instructed we, the more we still
are shamed.

'Tis well for us his generous blood did flow,
Derived from British channels long ago,
That here his conquering ancestors were
nursed ;

And Ireland but translated England first :
By this reprisal we regain our right,
Else must the two contending nations
fight 50

A nobler quarrel for his native earth,
Than what divided Greece for Homer's
birth.

To what perfection will our tongue arrive,
How will invention and translation thrive,
When authors nobly born will bear their
part,

And not disdain the inglorious praise of art !
Great generals thus, descending from com-
mand,

With their own toil provoke the soldier's
hand,

How will sweet Ovid's ghost be pleased to
hear

His fame augmented by an English peer ; 60
How he embellishes his Helen's loves,
Outdoes his softness and his sense improves !
When these translate, and teach translators
too,

Nor firstling kid, nor any vulgar vow,
Should at Apollo's grateful altar stand :
Roscommon writes : to that auspicious
hand,

Muse, feed the bull that spurns the yellow
sand.

Roscommon, whom both court and camps
commend,

True to his prince, and faithful to his
friend ;

Roscommon, first in fields of honour
known, 70

First in the peaceful triumphs of the gown ;
Who both Minervas justly makes his own.

Now let the few beloved by Jove, and they
Whom infused Titan * formed of better clay,
On equal terms with ancient wit engage,
Nor mighty Homer fear, nor sacred Virgil's
page :

Our English palace opens wide in state ;
And without stooping they may pass the
gate.

TO

THE DUCHESS OF YORK,†

ON HER RETURN FROM SCOTLAND IN
THE YEAR 1682.

WHEN factious rage to cruel exile drove
The queen of beauty, and the court of love,
The Muses drooped, with their forsaken
arts,
And the sad Cupids broke their useless
darts :

* Prometheus.

† The second Duchess of York, Mary Beatrice of Este. The Parliament opposed the Duke's marriage with a Roman Catholic, though he was himself one, and Anne Hyde, his first wife, had joined the Church of Rome before her death.

Our fruitful plains to wilds and deserts
turned,

Like Eden's face, when banished man it
mourned.

Love was no more, when loyalty was gone,
The great supporter of his awful throne.

Love could no longer after beauty stay,
But wandered northward to the verge of
day, 10

As if the sun and he had lost their way.

But now the illustrious nymph, returned
again,

Brings every grace triumphant in her train.
The wond'ring Nereids, though they raised
no storm,

Foreslowed her passage, to behold her form :
Some cried, A Venus ; some, A Thetis
passed ;

But this was not so fair, nor that so chaste.
Far from her sight flew Faction, Strife, and
Pride ;

And envy did but look on her, and died.
Whate'er we suffered from our sullen
fate, 20

Her sight is purchased at an easy rate.
Three gloomy years against this day were
set ;

But this one mighty sum has cleared the
debt :

Like Joseph's dream, but with a better
doom,

The famine past, the plenty still to come.

For her the weeping heavens become serene ;

For her the ground is clad in cheerful green :

For her the nightingales are taught to sing.

And nature has for her delayed the spring.

The Muse resumes her long-forgotten
lays, 30

And Love restored his ancient realm sur-
veys,

Recalls our beauties, and revives our plays,

His waste dominions peoples once again,

And from her presence dates his second
reign.

But awful charms on her fair forehead sit,

Dispensing what she never will admit :

Pleasing, yet cold, like Cynthia's silver beam,

The people's wonder, and the poet's theme.

Distempered Zeal, Sedition, cankered Hate,
No more shall vex the church, and tear the
state : 40

No more shall Faction civil discords move,
Or only discords of too tender love :

Discord, like that of music's various parts ;

Discord, that makes the harmony of hearts ;

Discord, that only this dispute shall bring,

Who best shall love the duke, and serve the
king.

A LETTER TO

SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE.*

To you who live in chill degree,
As map informs, of fifty-three,
And do not much for cold atone,

By bringing hither fifty-one,
Methinks all climes should be alike,

From tropic e'en to Pole Artique ;
Since you have such a constitution

As nowhere suffers diminution.
You can be old in grave debate,

And young in love-affairs of state ; 10

And both to wives and husbands show

The vigour of a Plenipo.

Like mighty missioner you come

" Ad Partes Infidelium."

A work of wondrous merit sure,

So far to go, so much t'endure ;

And all to preach to German dame,

Where sound of Cupid never came,

Less had you done, had you been sent,

As far as Drake or Pinto went, 20

For cloves or nutmegs to the line a,

Or e'en for oranges to China,

That had indeed been charity ;

Where love-sick ladies helpless lie,

Chapped, and for want of liquor dry.

* A wit and popular dramatic writer. He wrote three very successful comedies, "The Comical Revenge," "She would if She Could," and "The Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter;" but they have been long banished from the stage on account of their licentiousness. In 1683 he was knighted, and was sent as ambassador to Ratisbon, where he was killed by a fall down stairs in 1688. He was at Ratisbon when Dryden addressed this epistle to him.

But you have made your zeal appear
 Within the circle of the Bear.
 What region of the earth's so dull,
 That is not of your labours full?
 Triptolemus (so sung the Nine)
 Strewed plenty from his cart divine.
 But 'spite of all these fable-makers,
 He never sowed on Almain acres:
 No, that was left by fate's decree,
 To be performed and sung by thee.
 Thou break'st through forms with as much
 ease

As the French king through articles.
 In grand affairs thy days are spent,
 In waging weighty compliment,
 With such as monarchs represent.
 They, whom such vast fatigues attend,
 Want some soft minutes to unbend,
 To show the world that now and then
 Great ministers are mortal men.
 Then Rhenish rummers walk the round;
 In bumpers every king is crowned;
 Besides three holy mitred Hectors,
 And the whole college of Electors.
 No health of potentate is sunk,
 That pays to make his envoy drunk.
 These Dutch delights, I mentioned last,
 Suit not, I know, your English taste:
 For wine to leave a whore or play
 Was ne'er your Excellency's way.
 Nor need this title give offence,
 For here you were your Excellence,
 For gaming, writing, speaking, keeping,
 His Excellence for all but sleeping.
 Now if you tope in form, and treat,
 'Tis the sour sauce to the sweet meat,
 The fine you pay for being great.
 Nay, here's a harder imposition,
 Which is indeed the court's petition,
 That setting worldly pomp aside,
 Which poet has at font denied,
 You would be pleased in humble way
 To write a trifle called a Play.
 This truly is a degradation,
 But would oblige the crown and nation
 Next to your wise negotiation.
 If you pretend, as well you may,
 Your high degree, your friends will say

The duke St. Aignon made a play.
 If Gallic wit convince you scarce,
 His grace of Bucks has made a farce,
 And you, whose comic wit is terse all,
 Can hardly fall below Rehearsal.
 Then finish what you have began;
 But scribble faster if you can:
 For yet no George, to our discerning,
 Has writ without a ten years' warning.

TO MR. SOUTHERN,*

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED "THE WIVES'
 EXCUSE."

SURE there's a fate in plays, and 'tis in vain
 To write while these malignant planets
 reign.
 Some very foolish influence rules the pit,
 Not always kind to sense, or just to wit:
 And whilst it lasts, let buffoon'ry succeed,
 To make us laugh; for never was more
 need.
 Farce, in itself, is of a nasty scent;
 But the gain smells not of the excrement.
 The Spanish nymph, a wit and beauty too,
 With all her charms, bore but a single
 show:
 But let a monster Muscovite appear,
 He draws a crowded audience round the
 year.
 May be thou hast not pleased the box and
 pit;
 Yet those who blame thy tale applaud thy
 wit:
 So Terence plotted, but so Terence writ.
 Like his thy thoughts are true, thy language
 clean;
 E'en lewdness is made moral in thy scene.
 The hearers may for want of Nokes† re-
 pine;
 But rest secure, the readers will be thine.

* Thomas Southern was the author of several plays, of which "Isabella" and "Oronooko" were considered the best. Southern was a man of unblemished character, lived long, and made an independence by his dramatic works; but "The Wives' Excuse" was not a success.

† Nokes was a popular low comic actor.

Nor was thy laboured drama damned or
hissed, 30

But with a kind civility dismissed ;
With such good manners, as the Wife did
use,

Who, not accepting, did but just refuse.
There was a glance at parting ; such a look,
As bids thee not give o'er, for one rebuke.
But if thou would'st be seen, as well as read,
Copy one living author, and one dead :
The standard of thy style let Etherege be ;
For wit, the immortal spring of Wycherley :
Learn, after both, to draw some just de-
sign, 30
And the next age will learn to copy thine.

TO HENRY HIGDEN, ESQ.,

ON HIS TRANSLATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE
OF JUVENAL.*

THE Grecian wits, who Satire first began,
Were pleasant pasquins† on the life of
man ;

At mighty villains, who the state oppressed,
They durst not rail, perhaps ; they laughed,
at least,

And turned them out of office with a jest.
No fool could peep abroad, but ready stand
The drolls to clap a bauble in his hand.
Wise legislators never yet could draw
A fop within the reach of common law ;
For posture, dress, grimace and affecta-
tion, 10

Though foes to sense, are harmless to the
nation.

Our last redress is dint of verse to try,
And Satire is our court of Chancery.
This way took Horace to reform an age,
Not bad enough to need an author's rage.
But yours, who lived in more degenerate
times,

Was forced to fasten deep, and worry
crimes.

* A very inferior translation in the measure of
" Hudibras."

† Jestings writers.

Yet you, my friend, have tempered him
so well,

You make him smile in spite of all his zeal :
An art peculiar to yourself alone, 20

To join the virtues of two styles in one.
Oh ! were your author's principle re-
ceived,

Half of the labouring world would be re-
lieved :

For not to wish is not to be deceived.
Revenge would into charity be changed,
Because it costs too dear to be revenged :
It costs our quiet and content of mind,
And when 'tis compassed leaves a sting
behind.

Suppose I had the better end o' the staff,
Why should I help the ill-natured world to
laugh ? 30

'Tis all alike to them, who get the day ;
They love the spite and mischief of the fray.
No ; I have cured myself of that disease ;
Nor will I be provoked, but when I please :
But let me half that cure to you restore ;
You give the salve, I laid it to the sore.

Our kind relief against a rainy day,
Beyond a tavern, or a tedious play,
We take your book, and laugh our spleen
away.

If all your tribe, too studious of debate, 40
Would cease false hopes and titles to create,
Led by the rare example you begun,
Clients would fail, and lawyers be undone.

TO MY DEAR FRIEND

MR. CONGREVE,

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED "THE DOUBLE
DEALER."

WELL then, the promised hour is come at
last,

The present age of wit obscures the past :
Strong were our sires, and as they fought
they writ,
Conquering with force of arms, and dint
of wit :

Theirs was the giant race, before the flood :
And thus, when Charles returned, our
empire stood.

I, like Janus he the stubborn soil manured,
With rules of husbandry the rankness
cured ;

Tamed us to manners, when the stage was
rude ;

And boisterous English wit with art en-
dued. 10

Our age was cultivated thus at length ;
But what we gained in skill we lost in
strength.

Our builders were with want of genius
cursed ;

The second temple was not like the first :
Till you, the best Vitruvius, come at
length ;

Our beauties equal, but excel our strength.
Firm Doric pillars found your solid base :
The fair Corinthian crowns the higher
space :

Thus all below is strength, and all above is
grace.

In easy dialogue is Fletcher's praise ; 20
He moved the mind, but had not power to
raise.

Great Jonson did by strength of judgment
please ;

Yet, doubling Fletcher's force, he wants
his ease.

In differing talents both adorned their age ;
One for the study, t'other for the stage.

But both to Congreve justly shall submit,
One matched in judgment, both o'er-
matched in wit.

In him all beauties of this age we see,
Etherege his courtship, Southern's purity,
The satire, wit, and strength of manly
Wycheley. 30

All this in blooming youth you have
achieved :

Nor are your foiled contemporaries grieved.
So much the sweetness of your manners
move,

We cannot envy you, because we love.
Fabius might joy in Scipio, when he saw
A beardless consul made against the law,

And join his suffrage to the votes of Rome ;
Though he with Hannibal was overcome.

Thus old Romano bowed to Raphael's fame,
And scholar to the youth he taught
became. 40

Oh that your brows my laurel had sus-
tained !

Well had I been deposed, if you had
reigned :

The father had descended for the son ;
For only you are lineal to the throne.

Thus, when the state one Edward did
depose,

A greater Edward in his room arose.

But now, not I, but poetry is cursed ;

For Tom the second reigns like Tom the
first. *

But let them not mistake my patron's part,
Nor call his charity their own desert. 50

Yet this I prophesy ; thou shalt be seen,
(Though with some short parenthesis
between)

High on the throne of wit, and, seated
there,

Not mine, that's little, but thy laurel wear.

Thy first attempt an early promise made ;

That early promise this has more than paid.

So bold, yet so judiciously you dare,

That your least praise is to be regular.

Time, place, and action, may with pains
be wrought ;

But genius must be born, and never can be
taught. 60

This is your portion ; this your native store ;
Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
To Shakespeare gave as much ; she could
not give him more.

Maintain your post : that's all the fame
you need ;

For 'tis impossible you should proceed.

* William Congreve was born in Yorkshire in 1670, and brought out his first play in 1693. Dryden declared that he had never seen such a first play. He became greatly attached to the young dramatist, and wishes here that Congreve had succeeded him as laureate instead of Tom Shadwell. "Tom the Second" was Thomas Rymer, who was made historiographer. Nahum Tate succeeded Shadwell as laureate.

Already I am worn with cares and age,
 And just abandoning the ungrateful stage :
 Unprofitably kept at Heaven's expense,
 I live a rent-charge on His providence :
 But you, whom every muse and grace
 adorn, 70
 Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
 Be kind to my remains ; and oh, defend,*
 Against your judgment, your departed
 friend !
 Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
 But shade those laurels which descend to
 you :
 And take for tribute what these lines
 express :
 You merit more ; nor could my love do less.

TO

MR. GRANVILLE,†

ON HIS EXCELLENT TRAGEDY CALLED
 "HEROIC LOVE."

AUSPICIOUS poet, wert thou not my friend,
 How could I envy, what I must commend !
 But since 'tis nature's law, in love and wit,
 That youth should reign, and withering age
 submit,
 With less regret those laurels I resign,
 Which, dying on my brows, revive on thine.
 With better grace an ancient chief may
 yield
 The long-contended honours of the field,
 Than venture all his fortune at a cast,
 And fight, like Hannibal, to lose at last. 10
 Young princes, obstinate to win the prize,
 Though yearly beaten, yearly yet they rise :
 Old monarchs, though successful, still in
 doubt,
 Catch at a peace, and wisely turn devout.
 Thine be the laurel then ; thy blooming age
 Can best, if any can, support the stage ;

* Congreve faithfully and eloquently fulfilled
 this request.

† Created afterwards Lord Lansdowne. He
 was only a second-rate poet, though an amiable
 and excellent man.

Which so declines, that shortly we may see
 Players and plays reduced to second infancy.
 Sharp to the world, but thoughtless of
 renown,
 They plot not on the stage, but on the
 town, 20
 And, in despair their empty pit to fill,
 Set up some foreign monster in a bill.
 Thus they jog on, still tricking, never thriving,
 And murdering plays, which they miscall
 reviving.
 Our sense is nonsense, through their pipes
 conveyed ;
 Scarce can a poet know the play he made,
 'Tis so disguised in death ; nor thinks 'tis he
 That suffers in the mangled tragedy.
 Thus Itys first was killed, and after dressed
 For his own sire, the chief invited guest. 30
 I say not this of thy successful scenes,
 Where thine was all the glory, theirs the
 gains.
 With length of time, much judgment, and
 more toil,
 Not ill they acted, what they could not spoil.
 Their setting-sun still shoots a glimmering
 ray,
 Like ancient Rome, majestic in decay :
 And better gleanings their worn soil can
 boast,
 Than the crab-vintage of the neighbouring
 coast.
 This difference yet the judging world will
 see ; 40
 Thou copiest Homer, and they copy thee.

TO MY FRIEND

MR. MOTTEUX,‡

ON HIS TRAGEDY CALLED "BEAUTY IN
 DISTRESS."

'Tis hard, my friend, to write in such an
 age,
 As damns, not only poets, but the stage.
 That sacred art, by Heaven itself infused,
 Which Moses, David, Solomon have used,

‡ Peter Motteux was a French refugee, who,
 coming very young to England, became a perfect

Is now to be no more : the Muses' foes
 Would sink their Maker's praises into prose.
 Were they content to prune the lavish vine
 Of straggling branches, and improve the wine,
 Who, but a madman, would his thoughts
 defend ?
 All would submit ; for all but fools will
 mend. ¹⁰
 But when to common sense they give the lie,
 And turn distorted words to blasphemy,
 They give the scandal ; and the wise discern,
 Their glosses teach an age, too apt to
 learn,
 What I have loosely, or profanely writ,
 Let them to fires, their due desert, commit :
 Nor, when accused by me, let them com-
 plain :
 Their faults, and not their function, I
 arraign,
 Rebellion, worse than witchcraft, they
 pursued ;*
 The pulpit preached the crime, the people
 rued. ²⁰
 The stage was silenced ; for the saints would
 see
 In fields performed their plotted tragedy.
 But let us first reform, and then so live,
 That we may teach our teachers to forgive :
 Our desk be placed below their lofty chairs ;
 Ours be the practice, as the precept theirs.
 The moral part, at least, we may divide,
 Humility reward, and punish pride ;
 Ambition, interest, avarice, accuse :
 These are the province of a tragic muse. ³⁰
 These hast thou chosen ; and the public
 voice
 Has equalled thy performance with thy
 choice.
 Time, action, place, are so preserved by
 thee,
 That even Cornéille might with envy see
 The Alliance of his Tripled Unity.

master of the language. He wrote fifteen plays, and translated "Don Quixote" extremely well. He was a merchant, and made a large fortune. He was murdered in 1718.

* 1. Sam. xv. 23.

Thy incidents, perhaps, too thick are sown ;
 But too much plenty is thy fault alone.
 At least but two can that good crime
 commit,
 Thou in design, and Wycherley in wit.
 Let thy own Gauls condemn thee, if they
 dare ; ⁴⁰
 Contented to be thinly regular :
 Born there, but not for them, our fruitful
 soil
 With more increase rewards thy happy toil.
 Their tongue, enfeebled, is refined too much ;
 And, like pure gold, it bends at every touch :
 Our sturdy Teuton yet will art obey,
 More fit for manly thought, and strength-
 ened with allay.
 But whence art thou inspired, and thou
 alone,
 To flourish in an idiom not thy own ?
 It moves our wonder, that a foreign guest ⁵⁰
 Should over-match the most, and match
 the best.
 In under-praising, thy deserts I wrong ;
 Here find the first deficiency of our tongue :
 Words, once my stock, are wanting, to
 commend
 So great a poet, and so good a friend.

TO MY HONOURED KINSMAN

JOHN DRYDEN,†

OF CHESTERTON, IN THE COUNTY OF HUN-
 INGDON, ESQ.

How blessed is he, who leads a country life,
 Unvexed with anxious cares, and void of
 strife !
 Who studying peace, and shunning civil
 rage,
 Enjoyed his youth, and now enjoys his age :
 All who deserve his love, he makes his own ;
 And, to be loved himself, needs only to be
 known.
 Just, good and wise, contending neigh-
 bours come,

† John Driden or Dryden was first cousin to the poet, and younger brother of the then baronet.

From your award to wait their final doom ;
And, foes before, return in friendship home.
Without their cost, you terminate the
cause ;

And save the expense of long litigious laws,
Where suits are traversed ; and so little
won,

That he who conquers, is but last undone :
Such are not your decrees ; but so designed,
The sanction leaves a lasting peace behind :
Like your own soul, serene ; a pattern of
your mind.

Promoting concord, and composing strife,
Lord of yourself, uncumbered with a wife ;
Where, for a year, a month, perhaps a night,
Long penitence succeeds a short delight :
Minds are so hardly matched, that ev'n the
first,

Though paired by Heaven, in Paradise
were cursed.

For man and woman, though in one they
grow,

Yet, first or last, return again to two.

He to God's image, she to his was made ;
So, farther from the fount, the stream at
random strayed.

How could he stand, when, put to double
pain,

He must a weaker than himself sustain !
Each might have stood perhaps ; but each
alone ;

Two wrestlers help to pull each other
down.

Not that my verse would blemish all the
fair ;

But yet if some be bad, 'tis wisdom to
beware,

And better shun the bait, than struggle in
the snare.

Thus have you shunned, and shun the
married state,

Trusting as little as you can to fate.

No porter guards the passage of your
door,

T' admit the wealthy, and exclude the poor ;
For God, who gave the riches, gave the
heart

To sanctify the whole, by giving part ;

Heaven, who foresaw the will, the means
has wrought,

And to the second son a blessing brought ;
The first-begotten had his father's share :

But you, like Jacob, are Rebecca's heir.

So may your stores, and fruitful fields
increase,

And ever be you blessed, who live to
bless.

As Ceres sowed, where'er her chariot flew ;
As Heaven in deserts rained the bread of
dew ;

So free to many, to relations most,

You feed with manna your own Israel
host.

With crowds attended of your ancient
race,

You seek the champain sports, or sylvan
chase :

With well-breathed beagles you surround
the wood,

Ev'n then, industrious of the common good :
And often have you brought the wily fox

To suffer for the firstlings of the flocks ;
Chased even amid the folds ; and made to
bleed,

Like felons, where they did the murderous
deed.

This fiery game your active youth main-
tained,

Not yet by years extinguished, though re-
strained :

You season still with sports your serious
hours :

For age but tastes of pleasures, youth
devours.

The hare in pastures or in plains is found,
Emblem of human life, who runs the round,

And, after all his wandering ways are done,
His circle fills, and ends where he begun,
Just as the setting meets the rising sun.

Thus princes ease their cares ; but happier
he,

Who seeks not pleasure through necessity,
Than such as once on slippery thrones were
placed ;

And chasing, sigh to think themselves are
chased.

So lived our sires, ere doctors learned to
kill,
And multiplied with theirs the weekly bill.
The first physicians by debauch were made,
Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade,
Pity the generous kind their cares bestow
To search forbidden truths ; (a sin to know :)
To which if human science could attain,
The doom of death, pronounced by God,
were vain.

In vain the leech would interpose delay ;
Fate fastens first, and vindicates the prey. 80
What help from art's endeavours can we
have ?

Guibbons* but guesses, nor is sure to save :
But Maurus† sweeps whole parishes, and
peoples every grave ;

And no more mercy to mankind will use,
Than when he robbed and murdered Maro's
muse.

Would'st thou be soon despatched, and
perish whole,

Trust Maurus with thy life, and Milbourn‡
with thy soul.

By chase our long-lived fathers earned
their food ;

Toil strung the nerves, and purified the
blood :

But we their sons, a pampered race of men, 80
Are dwindled down to threescore years and
ten.

Better to hunt in fields, for health unbought,
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught ;
The wise, for cure, on exercise depend ;
God never made his work, for man to
mend.

The tree of knowledge, once in Eden
placed,

Was easy found, but was forbid the taste :
Oh, had our grandsire walked without his
wife,

He first had sought the better plant of life !

* Dr. Guibbons was a distinguished physician.

† Maurus is meant for Sir Richard Blackmore,
a physician and poet. He had previously attacked
Dryden, who thus avenges himself.

‡ A non-juring minister, who had ridiculed
Dryden's translation of Virgil.

Now both are lost ; yet, wandering in the
dark, 100

Physicians, for the tree, have found the bark :
They, labouring for relief of human kind,
With sharpened sight some remedies may
find ;

The apothecary-train is wholly blind.
From files a random recipe they take,
And many deaths of one prescription make.
Garth § generous as his muse, prescribes and
gives ;

The shopman sells ; and by destruction lives ;
Ungrateful tribe ! who, like the viper's brood,
From med'cine issuing, suck their mother's
blood ! 110

Let these obey ; and let the learned pre-
scribe ;

That men may die, without a double bribe :
Let them, but under their superiors, kill ;
When doctors first have signed the bloody
bill ;

He 'scapes the best, who, nature to repair,
Draws physic from the fields, in draughts of
vital air.

You hoard not health for your own
private use ;

But on the public spend the rich produce.
When, often urged, unwilling to be great,
Your country calls you from your loved
retreat, 120

And sends to senates, charged with common
care,

Which none more shuns : and none can
better bear :

Where could they find another formed so fit,
To poise, with solid sense, a sprightly wit ?
Were these both wanting, as they both
abound,

Where could so firm integrity be found ?

Well born, and wealthy, wanting no sup-
port,

You steer betwixt the country and the court :
Nor gratify whate'er the great desire,
Nor grudging give what public needs re-
quire. 130

§ The great physician, author of "The Dis-
pensary."

Part must be left, a fund when foes invade ;
 And part employed to roll the watery trade.
 Ev'n Canaan's happy land, when worn with
 toil,
 Required a sabbath-year to mend the
 meagre soil.

Good senators (and such are you) so give,
 That kings may be supplied, the people
 thrive.

And he, when want requires, is truly wise,
 Who slights not foreign aids, nor over-buys ;
 But on our native strength, in time of need,
 relies.

Munster was bought,* we boast not the
 success ;

Who fights for gain, for greater makes his
 peace.

Our foes, compelled by need, have peace
 embraced :

The peace both parties want, is like to last :
 Which if secure, securely we may trade ;
 Or, not secure, should never have been
 made.

Safe in ourselves, while on ourselves we
 stand,

The sea is ours, and that defends the land.
 Be, then, the naval stores the nation's care,
 New ships to build, and battered to repair.

Observe the war in every annual
 course ;

What has been done, was done with British
 force :

Namur subdued, is England's palm alone,†
 The rest besieged ; but we constrained the
 town :

We saw the event that followed our success ;
 France, though pretending arms, pursued
 the peace ;

Obliged, by one sole treaty, to restore
 What twenty years of war had won before.
 Enough for Europe has our Albion fought :
 Let us enjoy the peace our blood has bought.

* The Bishop of Munster, who received a large
 sum from England, and then went over to the
 Dutch.

† In the year 1695, William III. carried Namur,
 after a siege of one month.

When once the Persian king was put to
 flight,

The weary Macedons refused to fight :
 Themselves their own mortality confessed ;
 And left the son of Jove to quarrel for the
 rest.

Ev'n victors are by victories undone ;
 Thus Hannibal, with foreign laurels won,
 To Carthage was recalled, too late to keep
 his own.

While sore of battle, while our wounds are
 green,

Why should we tempt the doubtful die
 again ?

In wars renewed, uncertain of success ;
 Sure of a share, as umpires of the peace.‡

A patriot both the king and country serves :
 Prerogative, and privilege, preserves :

Of each our laws the certain limit show ;
 One must not ebb, nor t'other overflow :

Betwixt the prince and parliament we stand ;
 The barriers of the state on either hand :

May neither overflow, for then they drown
 the land.

When both are full, they feed our blessed
 abode ;

Like those that watered once the paradise
 of God.

Some overpoise of sway, by turns, they
 share ;

In peace the people, and the prince in war :
 Consuls of moderate power in calms were
 made :

When the Gauls came, one sole dictator
 swayed.

Patriots, in peace, assert the people's
 right ;

With noble stubbornness resisting might :
 No lawless mandates from the court receive,

Nor lend by force, but in a body give.
 Such was your generous grandsire § free to
 grant

In parliaments, that weighed their prince's
 want :

‡ The Peace of Ryswick.
 § Sir Erasmus Dryden.

But so tenacious of the common cause, 190
As not to lend the king against his laws,
And in a loathsome dungeon doomed to lie,
In bonds retained his birthright liberty,
And shamed oppression, till it set him free.

O true descendant of a patriot line,
Who, while thou shar'st their lustre, lend'st
them thine,

Vouchsafe this picture of thy soul to see ;
'Tis so far good, as it resembles thee :

The beauties to the original I owe ;
Which when I miss, my own defects I
show : 200

Nor think the kindred muses thy disgrace :
A poet is not born in every race.

Two of a house few ages can afford ;
One to perform, another to record.

Praiseworthy actions are by thee embraced ;
And 'tis my praise, to make thy praises
last.

For ev'n when death dissolves our human
frame,

The soul returns to heaven from whence it
came ;

Earth keeps the body, verse preserves the
fame.

TO

SIR GODFREY KNELLER,*

PRINCIPAL PAINTER TO HIS MAJESTY.

ONCE I beheld the fairest of her kind,
And still the sweet idea charms my mind :
True, she was dumb ; for Nature gazed so
long,

Pleased with her work, that she forgot her
tongue ;

But, smiling, said, " She still shall gain the
prize ;

I only have transferred it to her eyes."

* Sir Godfrey Kneller was born at Lubeck in 1648. Discovering early a predominant genius for painting, his father sent him to Amsterdam, where he studied under Bol, and had some instructions from Rembrandt. But Kneller was no servile imitator or disciple. Even in Italy, whither he went in 1672, he followed no particular master, not even at Venice, where he long resided. In

Such are thy pictures, Kneller : such thy
skill,

That Nature seems obedient to thy will ;
Comes out, and meets thy pencil in the
draught ; 10

Lives there, and wants but words to speak
her thought.

At least thy pictures look a voice ; and we
Imagine sounds, deceived to that degree,
We think 'tis somewhat more than just to
see.

Shadows are but privations of the light ;
Yet, when we walk, they shoot before the
sight ;

With us approach, retire, arise, and fall ;
Nothing themselves, and yet expressing all.
Such are thy pieces, imitating life

So near, they almost conquered in the strife ;
And from their animated canvas came, 20
Demanding souls, and loosened from the
frame.

Prometheus, were he here, would cast
away

His Adam, and refuse a soul to clay ;
And either would thy noble work inspire,
Or think it warm enough, without his fire.

But vulgar hands may vulgar likeness
raise ;

This is the least attendant on thy praise :
From hence the rudiments of art began ;

A coal, or chalk, first imitated man :
Perhaps the shadow, taken on a wall, 30

Gave outlines to the rude original :
Ere canvas yet was strained, before the
grace

Of blended colours found their use and place,
Or cypress tablets first received a face.

By slow degrees the godlike art advanced ;
As man grew polished, picture was en-
hanced :

1676 he came to England, and was soon patronised by Charles II. and James. Ten sovereigns at different times sat to him : Charles II., James II. and his Queen, William and Mary, George I., Louis XIV., and Charles VI. He stuck to portrait painting as the most lucrative, though Dryden in this very epistle inveighs so much against it. Of all his works he valued most the converted Chinese in Windsor Castle.—Dr. J. WARTON.

Greece added posture, shade, and perspective;

And then the mimic piece began to live.
Yet perspective was lame, no distance true,
But all came forward in one common view: 40
No point of light was known, no bound so fast;
When light was there, it knew not to depart,

But glaring on remoter objects played :
Not languished, and insensibly decayed.

Rome raised not art, but barely kept alive,

And with old Greece unequally did strive :
Till Goths, and Vandals, a rude northern race,

Did all the matchless monuments deface.

Then all the Muses in one ruin lie,
And rhyme began to enervate poetry. 50

Thus, in a stupid military state,
The pen and pencil find an equal fate.

Flat faces, such as would disgrace a screen,
Such as in Bantam's embassy were seen,

Unraised, unrounded, were the rude delight
Of brutal nations, only born to fight.

Long time the sister Arts, in iron sleep,*
A heavy sabbath did supinely keep :

At length, in Raphael's age, at once they rise,

Stretch all their limbs, and open all their eyes. 60

Thence rose the Roman, and the Lombard line :

One coloured best, and one did best design.
Raphael's, like Homer's, was the nobler

part,
But Titian's painting looked like Virgil's art.

Thy genius gives thee both; where true design,

Postures unforced, and lively colours join.
Likeness is ever there; but still the best,

Like proper thoughts in lofty language dressed :

* The art of painting expired in the year 580. It revived under Cimabue in 1240, but it was And. Mantegna, who was born in 1431 and whose cartoons are at Hampton Court, who was the first that revived a true taste for the antique.—Dr. J. WARTON.

Where light, to shades descending, plays,
not strives,

Dies by degrees, and by degrees revives. 70
Of various parts a perfect whole is wrought:
Thy pictures think, and we divine their thought.

Shakspeare, thy gift,† I place before my sight ;

With awe I ask his blessing ere I write ;
With reverence look on his majestic face ;

Proud to be less, but of his godlike race.
His soul inspires me, while thy praise I

write,
And I, like Teucer, under Ajax, fight :

Bids thee, through me, be bold ; with dauntless breast

Contemn the bad, and emulate the best. 80
Like his, thy critics in the attempt are lost :

When most they rail, know then, they envy most.

In vain they snarl aloof ; a noisy crowd,
Like women's anger, impotent and loud.

While they their barren industry deplore,
Pass on secure, and mind the goal before.

Old as she is, my Muse shall march behind,
Bear off the blast, and intercept the wind.

Our arts are sisters, though not twins in birth ; 90

For hymns were sung in Eden's happy earth : ‡

For oh, the painter Muse, though last in place,

Has seized the blessing first, like Jacob's race.

Apelles' art an Alexander found ;
And Raphael did with Leo's gold abound ,

But Homer was with barren laurel crowned.
Thou hadst thy Charles a while, and so

had I ;
But pass we that unpleasing image by.

† Sir Godfrey had presented Dryden with a copy of the Chandos portrait of Shakspeare.

‡ Four lines are here omitted which were in the third part of Dryden's "Miscellany Poems." They are—

By the first pair, while Eve was still a saint,
Before she fell with pride and learned to paint.
Forgive the allusion, 'twas not meant to bite,
But Satire will have room where'er I write,

They are restored in Macmillan's Globe Edition,

Rich in thyself, and of thyself divine ;
 All pilgrims come and offer at thy shrine.
 A graceful truth thy pencil can command ; 100
 The fair themselves go mended from thy hand.

Likeness appears in every lineament ;
 But likeness in thy work is eloquent.
 Though nature there her true resemblance
 bears,

A nobler beauty in thy piece appears.
 So warm thy work, so glows the generous
 frame,

Flesh looks less living in the lovely dame.
 'Thou paint'st as we describe, improving
 still,

When on wild nature we engraft our skill ;
 But not creating beauties at our will.* 110

But poets are confined in narrower space,
 To speak the language of their native place :
 The painter widely stretches his command ;
 Thy pencil speaks the tongue of every land.
 From hence, my friend, all climates are
 your own,

Nor can you forfeit, for you hold of none.
 All nations all immunities will give
 To make you theirs, where'er you please to
 live ;

And not seven cities, but the world would
 strive,

Sure some propitious planet then did
 smile, 120

When first you were conducted to this isle :
 Our genius brought you here, to enlarge
 our fame ;

For your good stars are everywhere the
 same.

* The following lines are omitted here, and
 restored in the Globe Edition :—

Some other hand perhaps may reach a face ;
 But none like thee a finished figure place ;
 None of this age, for that's enough for thee,
 The first of these inferior times to be ;
 Not to contend with heroes' memory.
 Due honours to those mighty names we grant,
 But shrubs may live beneath the lofty plant ;
 Sons may succeed their greater parents gone ;
 Such is thy lot, and such I wish my own.

We give these lines, but we think, whether the
 poet or his editor in Tonson's time suppressed
 them, the suppression was a wise one. The poem
 is better without them.

Thy matchless hand, of every region free,
 Adopts our climate, not our climate thee.

Great Rome and Venice early did impart
 To thee the examples of their wondrous art.
 Those masters then, but seen, not under-
 stood,

With generous emulation fired thy blood :
 For what in nature's dawn the child ad-
 mired, 130

The youth endeavoured, and the man ac-
 quired.

If yet thou hast not reached their high
 degree,

'Tis only wanting to this age, not thee.

Thy genius, bounded by the times, like
 mine,

Drudges on petty draughts, nor dare de-
 sign

A more exalted work, and more divine.

For what a song, or senseless opera

Is to the living labour of a play ;

Or what a play to Virgil's work would be,

Such is a single piece to history. 140

But we, who life bestow, ourselves must
 live ;

Kings cannot reign, unless their subjects
 give ;

And they, who pay the taxes, bear the
 rule :

Thus thou, sometimes, art forced to draw
 a fool :

But so his follies in thy posture sink,

The senseless idiot seems at last to think.

Good Heaven ! that sots and knaves
 should be so vain,

To wish their vile resemblance may remain !
 And stand recorded, at their own request,

To future days, a libel or a jest ! † 150

Else should we see your noble pencil
 trace

Our unities of action, time, and place :

A whole composed of parts, and those the
 best,

With every various character expressed :

† Here two more lines are omitted in Tonson's
 folio : they are these :—

Meantime while just encouragement you want,
 You only paint to live, not live to paint.

Heroes at large, and at a nearer view ;
 Less, and at distance, an ignoble crew.
 While all the figures in one action join,
 As tending to complete the main design.

More cannot be by mortal art expressed ;
 But venerable age shall add the rest. 100
 For Time shall with his ready pencil stand ;
 Retouch your figures with his ripening hand ;
 Mellow your colours, and imbrown the
 teint ;
 Add every grace, which time alone can
 grant ;
 To future ages shall your fame convey,
 And give more beauties than he takes
 away.

TO MY FRIEND

MR. J. NORTHLEIGH,

AUTHOR OF "THE PARALLEL,"

ON HIS "TRIUMPH OF THE BRITISH MONARCHY."*

So Joseph, yet a youth, expounded well
 The boding dream, and did th' event fore-
 tell ;
 Judged by the past, and drew the Parallel.
 Thus early Solomon the truth explored,
 The right awarded, and the babe restored.
 Thus Daniel, ere to prophecy he grew,
 The perjured Presbyters did first subdue,
 And freed Susanna from the canting crew.

* John Northleigh published in 1685 this work, which was a political one, as was "The Parallel," published two years previously. Northleigh afterwards became a physician.

Well may our Monarchy triumphant stand,
 While warlike James protects both sea and
 land ; 10

And, under covert of his sevenfold shield,
 Thou send'st thy shafts to scour the distant
 field.

By law thy powerful pen has set us free :
 Thou studiest that, and that may study thee.

LINES IN A LETTER

TO HIS COUSIN

HONOR DRIDEN,†

WHO HAD GIVEN HIM A SILVER INKSTAND,
 WITH A SET OF WRITING MATERIALS,
 1655.

For since 'twas mine, the white hath lost its
 hue,

To show 'twas ne'er itself but whilst in you,
 'The virgin wax hath blushed itself to red
 Since it with me hath lost its maidenhead.
 You, fairest nymph, are wax : O, may you
 be

As well in softness as in purity !
 Till fate and your own happy choice reveal
 Whom you shall so far bless to make your
 seal.

† Honor Driden was the daughter of Sir John Driden, the poet's uncle. Dryden, when living at Cambridge, was in love with this young lady, but she did not return his affection. Honor Driden never married, and probably regretted her rejection of her cousin, as it is said that she was proud of this letter, and fond of exhibiting it in the days of his after fame.

ELEGIES AND EPITAPHS.

NOTE.

These poems are, some of them at least, very well written, and a few remarkably good.

The "Ode on Mrs. Killigrew" was greatly admired by Dr. Johnson, but is too full of the conceits, fashionable at the time it was written, to be thought as excellent now.

The Elegy "On Lord Hastings" was Dryden's first poem, written when he was at Westminster school.

ELEGIES AND EPITAPHS.

UPON THE DEATH OF LORD HASTINGS.*

DRYDEN'S FIRST POEM, WRITTEN AT THE
AGE OF EIGHTEEN.

MUST noble Hastings immaturely die
The honour of his ancient family,

* Lord Hastings was the eldest and only son of the Earl of Huntingdon. He died of smallpox on the day preceding that fixed for his marriage to the daughter of the celebrated physician, Sir Theodore Mayerne. He had been a school-fellow of Dryden's at Westminster, and was near the young poet's own age, being only nineteen when he died—Dryden was seventeen. Lord Hastings was a youth of the highest promise, precociously learned, and his loss was generally regretted. A volume containing thirty-three Elegies on the event, written by different persons, was published, to which Dryden contributed his first known poem. It is remarkable that so young and unknown an author should have been united in the work with such poets as Herrick, Andrew Marvel, Sir John Denham, and Sir Aston Cokayne; and we may surmise from it that Dryden was either a great personal friend of Lord Hastings, or that his young genius was already perceived.

The volume of Elegies had the following grandiose title: "Lachrymæ Musarum, the Tears of the Muses expressed in Elegies written by divers persons of nobility and worth, upon the death of the most hopeful Henry, Lord Hastings, eldest son of the Right Honourable Ferdinando, Earl of Huntingdon, heir-general of the high-born Prince George, Duke of Clarence, brother to King Edward the Fourth."

Dryden's Elegy does not present much promise of his future skill in numbers, being marred by unnatural thoughts, far-fetched conceits, and inharmonious lines.

The Hastings family were distinguished for ability and excellence. The Earl who succeeded Lord Hastings' father in 1655 was the father of one of the most charming women ever known, if the portrait drawn of her by a celebrated dra-

Beauty and learning thus together meet,
To bring a winding for a wedding sheet? †
Must virtue prove death's harbinger? must
she,
With him expiring, feel mortality?
Is death, sin's wages, grace's now? shall
art
Make us more learn'd, only to depart?
If merit be disease; if virtue death;
To be good, not to be; who'd then be-
queath
Himself to discipline? who'd not esteem
Labour a crime? study self-murder deem?
Our noble youth now have pretence to be
Dunces securely, ignorant healthfully.

matist is correct; and to a following Earl Aken-side addressed an Ode of some poetical beauty, and Dr. Warton, who knew him personally, says he was distinguished "for the elegance of his manners, his pleasing affability, his extensive knowledge of men and things, the variety and vigour of his wit and conversation, enlivened by many curious facts and anecdotes, his accurate taste in all parts of polite literature, and his universal candour and benevolence."

The character of Aspasia, written by Congreve, in the *Tatler*, No. 72, is meant for Lady E. Hastings. She was daughter of Theophilus Hastings, seventh Earl of Huntingdon. Her father came to the honours and estate of that house in 1655. So that three poets, Dryden, Congreve, and Aken-side, celebrated the Hastings family.

†—*a winding for a wedding sheet!* In this line the poet alludes to the melancholy circumstance of Lord Hastings' death having taken place on the day preceding that which, previously to his illness, had been appointed for the celebration of his marriage. The lady to whom he was betrothed was the daughter of a very celebrated physician, Sir Theodore Mayerne, whose skill was in vain exerted to save his intended son-in-law from that malignant disorder, the smallpox. "Pridè sponsalium (proh Hymenæe!) funere luit immaturo,"

Rare linguist,* whose worth speaks itself,
 whose praise,
 Though not his own, all tongues besides do
 raise :
 Than whom great Alexander may seem
 less ;
 Who conquered men, but not their
 languages.
 In his mouth nations spake ; his tongue
 might be
 Interpreter to Greece, France, Italy. 20
 His native soil was the four parts o' the
 earth ;
 All Europe was too narrow for his birth.
 A young apostle ; and, with reverence may
 I speak't, inspired with gift of tongues, as
 they.
 Nature gave him, a child, what men in vain
 Oft strive, by art though furthered, to obtain.
 His body was an orb, his sublime soul
 Did move on virtue's and on learning's pole :

says his epitaph. See also the following verses of Andrew Marvel, in the collection already mentioned :—

"The gods themselves cannot their joy conceal,
 But draw their veils, and their pure beams reveal ;
 Only they drooping Hymeneus note,
 Who, for sad purple, tears his saffron coat,
 And trails his torches through the starry hall,
 Reversed, for his darling's funeral,
 And Æsculapius, who, ashamed and stern,
 Himself at once condemneth and Mayern ;
 Like some sad chymist, who, prepared to reap
 His golden harvest, sees his glasses leap ;
 For how immortal must their race have stood,
 Had Mayern once been mixed with Hastings' blood !

But what could he, good man, although he mixed
 All herbs, and them a thousand ways infused," &c.

The elegy in which these verses occur, is by far the best in the collection, if we except that of our author.—MALONE.

* *Rare linguist.*] On this topic Sir Aston Cokayne, in his elegy on Lord Hastings, thus expatiates :—

"His few, but well-pent years, had mastered all
 The liberal arts, and his sweet tongue could fall
 Into the ancient dialects ; dispense
 Sacred Judea's amplest eloquence ;
 The Latine idiom elegantly true,
 And Greek as rich as Athens ever knew :
 The Italian and the French do both confess
 Him perfect in their modern languages."
 "Lachrymæ Musarum," &c., 1650.

All these attainments were made at an early age ; for Lord Hastings died in his nineteenth (not, as Derrick has it, his *twentieth*) year, on the 23rd of June 1649, after an illness of only seven days' duration.—MALONE.

Whose regular motions better to our view,
 Than Archimedes' sphere, the heavens did
 show. 30

Graces and virtues, languages and arts,
 Beauty and learning, filled up all the parts.
 Heaven's gifts, which do like falling stars
 appear

Scattered in others ; all, as in their sphere,
 Were fixed, conglobate in his soul ; and
 thence

Shone through his body, with sweet influ-
 ence ;

Letting their glories so on each limb fall,
 The whole frame rendered was celestial.
 Come, learned Ptolemy, and trial make,

If thou this hero's altitude canst take : 40
 But that transcends thy skill ; thrice happy
 all,

Could we but prove thus astronomical.
 Lived Tycho now, struck with this ray,
 which shone

More bright i' the morn, than others beam
 at noon,

He'd take his astrolabe, and seek out here
 What new star 'twas did gild our hemi-
 sphere.

Replenished then with such rare gifts as
 these,

Where was room left for such a foul
 disease?

The nation's sin hath drawn that veil, which
 shrouds

Our dayspring in so sad benighting
 clouds. 50

Heaven would no longer trust its pledge ;
 but thus

Recalled it ; rapt its Ganymede from us.
 Was there no milder way but the smallpox,
 The very filthiness of Pandora's box ?

So many spots, like næves our Venus soil,
 One jewel set off with so many a foil ;

Blisters with pride swelled, which through's
 flesh did sprout

Like rose-buds, stuck i' the lily skin about.
 Each little pimple had a tear in it,

To wait the fault its rising did commit : 60
 Which, rebel like, with its own lord at strife,
 Thus made an insurrection 'gainst his life.

Or were these gems sent to adorn his skin,

The cabinet of a richer soul within?

No comet need foretell his change drew on,
Whose corpse might seem a constellation.

O! had he died of old, how great a strife
Had been, who from his death should draw
their life!

Who should, by one rich draught, become
whate'er

Seneca, Cato, Numa, Cæsar, were? 70

Learned, virtuous, pious, great; and have
by this

An universal metempsychosis.

Must all these aged sires in one funeral

Expire? all die in one so young, so small?

Who, had he lived his life out, his great
fame

Had swell'n 'bove any Greek or Roman
name.

But hasty winter, with one blast, hath
brought

The hopes of autumn, summer, spring, to
nought.

Thus fades the oak i' the sprig, i' the blade
the corn;

Thus without young, this Phoenix dies, new
born. 80

Must then old three-legged grey-beards with
their gout,

Catarrhs, rheums, aches, live three ages
out?

Time's offals, only fit for the hospital!

Or to hang antiquaries' rooms withal!

Must drunkards, lechers, spent with sin-
ning, live

With such helps as broths, possets, physic
give?

None live, but such as should die? shall
we meet

With none but ghostly fathers in the street?
Grief makes me rail; sorrow will force its

way;

And showers of tears tempestuous sighs
best lay. 90

The tongue may fail; but overflowing
eyes

Will weep out lasting streams of elegies.

But thou, O virgin-widow, left alone,
Now thy beloved, heaven-ravished spouse
is gone,

Whose skilful sire in vain strove to apply
Med'cines, when thy balm was no remedy,
With greater than Platonic love, O wed
His soul, though not his body, to thy bed:
Let that make thee a mother; bring thou
forth

The ideas of his virtue, knowledge,
worth; 100

Transcribe the original in new copies; give
Hastings o' the better part: so shall he live
In's nobler half; and the great grandsire bed
Of an heroic divine progeny:

An issue, which to eternity shall last,

Yet but the irradiations which he cast.

Erect no mausoleums: for his best

Monument is his spouse's marble breast.*

TO THE MEMORY OF

M R. OLDHAM.†

FAREWELL, too little, and too lately known,
Whom I began to think, and call my own:
For sure our souls were near allied, and
thine

Cast in the same poetic mould with mine.

One common note on either lyre did strike,
And knaves and fools we both abhorred
alike.

* The verses on Lord Hastings, in the "Lachrymæ Musarum," are subscribed "Johannes Dryden. Scholæ Westm. alumnus." — It appears, from a note of the editor's, that they were sent at a late period in the year (1649), after a great part of the book was printed off, and when it was just ready for publication. — MALONE.

† John Oldham was born in 1658. After taking his B.A. at Oxford, he became usher in the Free School, Croydon. Some of his poems were read by Lords Rochester and Dorset, and they procured him the appointment of tutor to the grandsons of Sir Edward Thurland, and afterwards to a son of Sir W. Hicks. He then went to reside with Lord Kingston. He wrote "Satires against the Jesuits," and, as they were produced in the midst of the religious excitement, they became very popular. Oldham died in 1683, at the age of twenty-five.

To the same goal did both our studies drive;
The last set out, the soonest did arrive.

Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
Whilst his young friend performed, and
won the race. 10

Oh early ripe! to thy abundant store
What could advancing age have added
more?

It might (what nature never gives the young)
Have taught the numbers of thy native
tongue.

But satire needs not those, and wit will
shine

Through the harsh cadence of a rugged
line.

A noble error, and but seldom made,
When poets are by too much force betrayed.
Thy generous fruits, though gathered ere
their prime,

Still showed a quickness; and maturing
time 20

But mellows what we write, to the dull
sweets of rhyme.

Once more, hail, and farewell; farewell,
thou young,

But ah too short, Marcellus of our tongue!
Thy brows with ivy, and with laurels bound;
But fate and gloomy night encompass thee
around.

TO THE PIOUS MEMORY OF THE
ACCOMPLISHED YOUNG LADY

MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW,*

EXCELLENT IN THE TWO SISTER ARTS OF
POESY AND PAINTING.

AN ODE.

I.

THOU youngest virgin-daughter of the skies,
Made in the last promotion of the blessed;
Whose palms, new plucked from paradise,
In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
Rich with immortal green above the rest:

* Anne Killigrew was the daughter of a clergyman, who was Prebendary of Westminster. She was maid of honour to the Duchess of York, and

Whether, adopted to some neighb'ring
star,

Thou roll'st above us, in thy wandering
race,

Or, in procession fixed and regular,
Mov'st with the heaven's majestic pace;
Or, called to more superior bliss, 10

Thou tread'st, with seraphims, the vast
abyss:

Whatever happy region is thy place,
Cease thy celestial song a little space;

Thou wilt have time enough for hymns
divine,

Since heaven's eternal year is thine.

Hear then a mortal Muse thy praise re-
hearse,

In no ignoble verse;

But such as thy own voice did practise here,
When thy first fruits of poesy were given;

To make thyself a welcome inmate there: 20

While yet a young probationer,

And candidate of heaven.

II.

If by traduction came thy mind,

Our wonder is the less to find

A soul so charming from a stock so good;

Thy father was transfused into thy blood: †

So wert thou born into a tuneful strain,

An early, rich, and inexhausted vein.

But if thy pre-existing soul

Was formed at first, with myriads
more, 30

It did through all the mighty poets roll,

Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,

And was that Sappho last, which once it
was before.

If so, then cease thy flight, O heaven-
born mind!

Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich
ore:

painted her Royal Highness's likeness, and also a portrait of the Duke. She was beautiful, highly accomplished, and very devout. After her death her poems were published with Dryden's elegiac ode prefixed to them. She was born in 1660, and died in 1685.

† Her father was also a writer, and had produced a drama.

Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find,
Than was the beauteous frame she left
behind :

Return to fill or mend the choir of thy
celestial kind.

III.

May we presume to say, that, at thy birth,
New joy was sprung in heaven, as well as
here on earth. 40

For sure the milder planets did combine
On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
And e'en the most malicious were in trine.*

Thy brother-angels at thy birth
Strung each his lyre, and tuned it high,
That all the people of the sky
Might know a poetess was born on earth.
And then, if ever, mortal ears
Had heard the music of the spheres,
And if no clustering swarm of bees 50
On thy sweet mouth distilled their golden
dew,†

'Twas that such vulgar miracles ‡
Heaven had not leisure to renew :

For all the blest fraternity of love
Solemnized there thy birth, and kept thy
holiday above.

IV.

O gracious God ! how far have we
Profaned thy heavenly gift of poesy !
Made prostitute and profligate the Muse,
Debased to each obscene and impious use,
Whose harmony was first ordained above 60
For tongues of angels, and for hymns of love !
Oh wretched we ! why were we hurried down

This lubrique and adulterate age,
(Nay, added fat pollutions of our own)

* An auspicious conjunction of the planets, in the form of a triangle. As we have already said, Dryden was learned in astrology, and a devout believer in it. He cast the horoscope of his eldest son, Charles Dryden.

† It was said that when the infant Plato was asleep, "a clustering swarm of bees" settled on his lips, thus foretelling the honey sweetness of the future philosopher's melodious Greek.

‡ The last syllable of *miracles* must rhyme with *bees*.

To increase the steaming ordures of the
stage ?

What can we say to excuse our second fall ?
Let this thy vestal, Heaven, atone for all :
Her Arethusian § stream remains unsoiled,
Unmixed with foreign filth, and undefiled ;
Her wit was more than man, her innocence
a child. 70

V.

Art she had none, yet wanted none :
For nature did that want supply :
So rich in treasures of her own,
She might our boasted stores defy :
Such noble vigour did her verse adorn,
That it seemed borrowed, where 'twas only
born.

Her morals too were in her bosom bred,
By great examples daily fed,
What in the best of books, her father's life,
she read.

And to be read herself she need not fear ; 80
Each test, and every light, her muse will
bear,
Though Epictetus with his lamp were there.
E'en love (for love sometimes her muse ex-
prest)

Was but a lambent flame which played
about her breast :

Light as the vapours of a morning dream,
So cold herself, while she such warmth ex-
pressed,

'Twas Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

VI.

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
One would have thought, she should have
been content

To manage well that mighty govern-
ment ; 90

But what can young ambitious souls con-
fine ?

§ Arethusa, in Greek mythology, was a nymph who was changed by Diana into a stream or river, to save her from the pursuit of Alpheus, the god of the river of that name. See Shelley's "Arethusa."

To the next realm she stretched her
 sway,
 For Painture * near adjoining lay,
 A plenteous province, and alluring prey.
 A chamber of Dependencies was framed,
 (As conquerors will never want pretence,
 When armed, to justify the offence)
 And the whole fief, in right of poetry, she
 claimed.
 The country open lay without defence :
 For poets frequent inroads there had made,
 And perfectly could represent 100
 The shape, the face, with every line-
 ment,
 And all the large domains which the Dumb
 Sister swayed.
 All bowed beneath her government,
 Received in triumph wheresoe'er she
 went.
 Her pencil drew, whate'er her soul designed,
 And oft the happy draught surpassed the
 image in her mind.
 The Sylvan scenes of herds and flocks,
 And fruitful plains and barren rocks,
 Of shallow brooks that flowed so clear, 110
 The bottom did the top appear ;
 Of deeper too and ampler floods,
 Which, as in mirrors, showed the woods ;
 Of lofty trees, with sacred shades,
 And perspectives of pleasant glades,
 Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
 And shaggy satyrs standing near,
 Which them at once admire and fear.
 The ruins too of some majestic piece,
 Boasting the power of ancient Rome, or
 Greece, 120
 Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
 And, though defaced, the wonder of the
 eye ;
 What nature, art, bold fiction, e'er durst
 frame,
 Her forming hand gave feature to the
 name.
 So strange a concourse ne'er was seen before,
 But when the peopled ark the whole crea-
 tion bore.

* Painting—*painture* is now an obsolete word.

VII.

The scene then changed, with bold erected
 look
 Our martial king the sight with reverence
 strook : †
 For not content to express his outward part,
 Her hand called out the image of his
 heart : 130
 His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
 His high-designing thoughts were figured
 there,
 As when, by magic, ghosts are made appear.
 Our phoenix queen was portrayed too so
 bright,
 Beauty alone could beauty take so right :
 Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
 Were all observed, as well as heavenly
 face.
 With such a peerless majesty she stands,
 As in that day she took the crown from
 sacred hands :
 Before a train of heroines was seen, 140
 In beauty foremost, as in rank, the queen.
 Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
 But like a ball of fire the further thrown,
 Still with a greater blaze she shone,
 And her bright soul broke out on every side.
 What next she had designed, Heaven only
 knows :
 To such immoderate growth her conquest
 rose,
 That fate alone its progress could oppose.

VIII.

Now all those charms, that blooming
 grace,
 The well-proportioned shape, and beauteous
 face, 150
 Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes ;
 In earth the much-lamented virgin lies.
 Not wit, nor piety could fate prevent ;
 Nor was the cruel destiny content
 To finish all the murder at a blow,
 To sweep at once her life, and beauty too ;
 But, like a hardened felon, took a pride

† Miss Killigrew painted the portraits of James II. and his Queen.

To work more mischievously slow,
 And plundered first, and then destroyed.
 O double sacrilege on things divine, 180
 To rob the relic, and deface the shrine !
 But thus Orinda* died :
 Heaven, by the same disease, did both
 translate ;
 As equal were their souls, so equal was their
 fate.

IX.

Meantime her warlike brother on the seas
 His waving streamers to the winds dis-
 plays,
 And vows for his return, with vain devotion,
 pays.
 Ah, generous youth, that wish forbear,
 The winds too soon will waft thee here !
 Slack all thy sails, and fear to come, 170
 Alas, thou know'st not, thou art wrecked at
 home !
 No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face,
 Thou hast already had her last embrace.
 But look aloft, and if thou kenn'st from far
 Among the Pleiads a new-kindled star,
 If any sparkles than the rest more bright ;
 'Tis she that shines in that propitious light.

X.

When in mid-air the golden trump shall
 sound,
 To raise the nations under ground :
 When in the valley of Jehoshaphat, 180
 The judging God shall close the book of
 fate ;
 And there the last assizes keep,
 For those who wake, and those who sleep :

* Orinda was Katherine Philips, author of a book of poems published in folio, and of several other things. She died also of the smallpox in 1664, being only thirty-two years of age.

When rattling bones together fly,
 From the four corners of the sky ;
 When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
 Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires
 the dead ;
 The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
 And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
 For they are covered with the lightest
 ground ; 190
 And straight, with inborn vigour, on the
 wing,
 Like mounting larks, to the new morning
 sing.
 There thou, sweet saint, before the quire
 shalt go,
 As harbinger of heaven, the way to show,
 The way which thou so well hast learned
 below.

UPON THE DEATH OF

THE EARL OF DUNDEE.†

Oh last and best of Scots ! who didst
 maintain
 Thy country's freedom from a foreign reign ;
 New people fill the land now thou art gone,
 New gods the temples, and new kings the
 throne.
 Scotland and thee did each in other live ;
 Nor would'st thou her, nor could she thee
 survive.
 Farewell, who dying didst support the state,
 And could'st not fall but with thy country's
 fate.

† John Graham, Viscount Dundee, better known as Claverhouse, had been created an Earl by James II. He fell at the battle of Killcrankie, the last fought for James. He was remarkable for great personal beauty and undaunted courage. See Professor Aytoun's "Funeral March of Dundee."

ELEONORA:

A PANEGRYICAL POEM,

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE COUNTESS OF ABINGDON.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF ABINGDON, &c.

MY LORD,

THE commands with which you honoured me some months ago are now performed. They had been sooner; but betwixt ill-health, some business, and many troubles, I was forced to defer them till this time. Ovid, going to his banishment, and writing from on shipboard to his friends, excused the faults of his poetry by his misfortunes; and told them, that good verses never flow, but from a serene and composed spirit. Wit, which is a kind of Mercury, with wings fastened to his head and heels, can fly but slowly in a damp air. I therefore chose rather to obey you late than ill; if at least I am capable of writing any thing, at any time, which is worthy your perusal and your patronage. I cannot say that I have escaped from a shipwreck; but have only gained a rock by hard swimming; where I may pant a while and gather breath; for the doctors give me a sad assurance, that my disease never took its leave of any man, but with a purpose to return. However, my lord, I have laid hold on the interval, and managed the small stock, which age has left me, to the best advantage, in performing this inconsiderable service to my lady's memory. We, who are priests of Apollo, have not the inspiration when we please: but must wait till the god comes rushing on us, and invades us with a fury, which we are not able to resist: which gives us double strength while the fit continues, and leaves us languishing and spent, at its departure. Let me not seem to boast, my lord, for I have really felt it on this occasion, and prophesied beyond my natural power. Let me add, and hope to be believed, that the excellency of the subject contributed much to the happiness of the execution; and that the weight of thirty years was taken off me, while I was writing. I swam with the tide, and the water under me was buoyant. The reader will easily observe, that I was transported by the multitude and variety of my similitudes; which are generally the product of a luxuriant fancy, and the wantonness of wit. Had I called in my judgment to my assistance, I had certainly retrenched many of them. But I defend them not; let them pass for beautiful faults amongst the better sort of critics:

* Eleonora, Countess of Abingdon, was a coheirress of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, Oxfordshire. Her sister was Mrs. Annie Wharton, celebrated at that time as a poetess. Waller was her friend, and addressed some verses to her.

for the whole poem, though written in that which they call Heroic verse, is of the Pindaric nature, as well in the thought as the expression ; and, as such, requires the same grains of allowance for it. It was intended, as your lordship sees in the title, not for an elegy, but a panegyric : a kind of apotheosis, indeed, if a heathen word may be applied to a Christian use. And on all occasions of praise, if we take the ancients for our patterns, we are bound by prescription to employ the magnificence of words, and the force of figures, to adorn the sublimity of thoughts. Isocrates amongst the Grecian orators, and Cicero, and the younger Pliny, amongst the Romans, have left us their precedents for our security : for I think I need not mention the inimitable Pindar, who stretches on these pinions out of sight, and is carried upward, as it were, into another world.

This, at least, my lord, I may justly plead, that, if I have not performed so well as I think I have, yet I have used my best endeavours to excel myself. One disadvantage I have had ; which is, never to have known or seen my lady ; and to draw the lineaments of her mind, from the description which I have received from others, is for a painter to set himself at work without the living original before him ; which, the more beautiful it is, will be so much the more difficult for him to conceive, when he has only a relation given him of such and such features by an acquaintance or a friend, without the nice touches, which give the best resemblance, and make the graces of the picture. Every artist is apt enough to flatter himself (and I amongst the rest) that their own ocular observations would have discovered more perfections, at least others, than have been delivered to them : though I have received mine from the best hands, that is, from persons who neither want a just understanding of my lady's worth, nor a due veneration for her memory.

Doctor Donne, the greatest wit, though not the greatest poet of our nation, acknowledges, that he had never seen Mrs. Drury, whom he has made immortal in his admirable Anniversaries. I have had the same fortune, though I have not succeeded to the same genius. However, I have followed his footsteps in the design of his panegyric ; which was to raise an emulation in the living, to copy out the example of the dead. And therefore it was, that I once intended to have called this poem, *The Pattern* : and though, on a second consideration, I changed the title into the name of the illustrious person, yet the design continues, and Eleonora is still the pattern of charity, devotion, and humility ; of the best wife, the best mother, and the best of friends.

And now, my lord, though I have endeavoured to answer your commands, yet I could not answer it to the world, nor to my conscience, if I gave not your lordship my testimony of being the best husband now living : I say my testimony only ; for the praise of it is given you by yourself. They who despise the rules of virtue both in their practice and their morals, will think this a very trivial commendation. But I think it the peculiar happiness of the Countess of Abingdon to have been so truly loved by you while she was living, and so gratefully honoured after she was dead. Few there are who have either had, or could have, such a loss ; and yet fewer who carried their love and constancy beyond the grave. The exteriors of mourning, a decent funeral, and black habits, are the usual stints of common husbands : and perhaps their wives deserve no better than to be mourned with hypocrisy, and forgot with ease. But you have distinguished yourself from ordinary lovers, by a real and lasting grief for the deceased ; and by endeavouring to raise for her the most durable monument, which is that of verse. And so it would have proved, if the workman had been equal to the work, and your choice of the artificer as happy as your design. Yet, as Phidias, when he had made the statue of Minerva, could not forbear to engrave his own name, as author of the piece ; so give me leave to

hope, that, by subscribing mine to this poem, I may live by the goddess, and transmit my name to posterity by the memory of hers. 'Tis no flattery to assure your lordship, that she is remembered, in the present age, by all who have had the honour of her conversation and acquaintance; and that I have never been in any company since the news of her death was first brought me, where they have not extolled her virtues, and even spoken the same things of her in prose, which I have done in verse.

I therefore think myself obliged to thank your lordship for the commission which you have given me: how I have acquitted myself of it, must be left to the opinion of the world, in spite of any protestation which I can enter against the present age, as incompetent or corrupt judges. For my comfort, they are but Englishmen, and, as such, if they think ill of me to-day, they are inconstant enough to think well of me to-morrow. And after all, I have not much to thank my fortune that I was born amongst them. The good of both sexes are so few, in England, that they stand like exceptions against general rules: and though one of them has deserved a greater commendation than I could give her, they have taken care that I should not tire my pen with frequent exercise on the like subjects; that praises, like taxes, should be appropriated, and left almost as individual as the person. They say, my talent is satire: if it be so, 'tis a fruitful age, and there is an extraordinary crop to gather. But a single hand is insufficient for such a harvest: they have sown the dragon's teeth themselves, and 'tis but just they should reap each other in lampoons. You, my lord, who have the character of honour, though 'tis not my happiness to know you, may stand aside, with the small remainders of the English nobility, truly such, and, unhurt yourselves, behold the mad combat. If I have pleased you, and some few others, I have obtained my end. You see I have disabled myself, like an elected Speaker of the House: yet like him I have undertaken the charge, and find the burden sufficiently recompensed by the honour. Be pleased to accept of these my unworthy labours, this paper monument; and let her pious memory, which I am sure is sacred to you, not only plead the pardon of my many faults, but gain me your protection, which is ambitiously sought by, My Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient
Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

ELEONORA.

- * As when some great and gracious monarch
dies,
Soft whispers first, and mournful murmurs
rise
Among the sad attendants ; then the sound
Soon gathers voice, and spreads the news
around,
Through town and country, till the dreadful
blast
Is blown to distant colonies at last ;
Who, then, perhaps, were offering vows in
vain,
For his long life, and for his happy reign :
So slowly, by degrees, unwilling fame
Did matchless Eleonora's fate proclaim, 10
Till public as the loss the news became.
The nation felt it in the extremest parts,
With eyes o'erflowing, and with bleeding
hearts ;
† But most the poor, whom daily she supplied,
Beginning to be such but when she died.
For, while she lived, they slept in peace by
night,
Secure of bread, as of returning light ;
And with such firm dependence on the day,
That need grew pampered, and forgot to
pray :
So sure the dole, so ready at their call, 20
They stood prepared to see the manna fall.
Such multitudes she fed, she clothed, she
nursed,
That she herself might fear her wanting
first.
- * *The Introduction.*—Marginal note of original
edition.
† *Of her charity.*—Marginal note.
- Of her five talents, other five she made ;
Heaven, that had largely given, was largely
paid :
And in few lives, in wondrous few, we find
A fortune better fitted to the mind.
Nor did her alms from ostentation fall,
Or proud desire of praise ; the soul gave all :
Unbribed it gave ; or, if a bribe appear, 30
No less than heaven ; to heap huge treasures
there.
Want passed for merit at her open door :
Heaven saw He safely might increase His
poor,
And trust their sustenance with her so well,
As not to be at charge of miracle.
None could be needy, whom she saw, or
knew ;
All in the compass of her sphere she drew :
He, who could touch her garment, was as
sure,
As the first Christians of the apostles' cure.
The distant heard, by fame, her pious
deeds, 40
And laid her up for their extremest needs ;
A future cordial for a fainting mind ;
For, what was ne'er refused, all hoped to
find,
Each in his turn : the rich might freely
come,
As to a friend ; but to the poor, 'twas home.
As to some holy house the afflicted came,
The hunger-starved, the naked and the lame ;
Want and diseases fled before her name.
For zeal like hers her servants were too slow ;
She was the first, where need required, to
go ; 50
Herself the foundress and attendant too.

Sure she had guests sometimes to entertain,
 Guests in disguise, of her great Master's train:
 Her Lord Himself might come, for aught we know;
 Since in a servant's form He lived below:
 Beneath her roof He might be pleased to stay;
 Or some benighted angel, in his way,
 Might ease his wings, and, seeing heaven appear
 In its best work of mercy, think it there,
 Where all the deeds of charity and love 60
 Were in as constant method, as above,
 All carried on; all of a piece with theirs;
 As free her alms, as diligent her cares;
 As loud her praises, and as warm her prayers.
 Yet was she not profuse,* but feared to waste,
 And wisely managed, that the stock might last;
 That all might be supplied, and she not grieve,
 When crowds appeared, she had not to relieve:
 Which to prevent, she still increased her store;
 Laid up, and spared, that she might give the more. 70
 So Pharaoh, or some greater king than he,
 Provided for the seventh necessity:
 Taught from above his magazines to frame;
 That famine was prevented ere it came.
 Thus Heaven, though all sufficient, shows a thrift
 In His economy, and bounds His gift:
 Creating, for our day, one single light;
 And his reflection too supplies the night.
 Perhaps a thousand other worlds, that lie
 Remote from us, and latent in the sky, 80
 Are lightened by his beams, and kindly nursed;
 Of which our earthly dunghill is the worst.

* *Of her prudent management.*

Now, as all virtues keep the middle line,
 Yet somewhat more to one extreme incline
 Such was her soul; abhorring avarice,
 Bounteous, but almost bounteous to a vice:
 Had she given more, it had profusion been,
 And turned the excess of goodness into sin.

These virtues raised her fabric to the sky;
 For that which is next heaven is charity. 90
 But, as high turrets, for their airy steep,
 Require foundations, in proportion deep;
 And lofty cedars as far upward shoot,
 As to the nether heavens they drive the root;

So low did her secure foundation lie,
 She was not humble, but Humility.†
 Scarcely she knew that she was great, or fair,

Or wise, beyond what other women are,
 Or, which is better, knew, but never durst compare.

For to be conscious of what all admire, 100
 And not be vain, advances virtue higher.
 But still she found, or rather thought she found,

Her own worth wanting, others' to abound;
 Ascribed above their due to every one,
 Unjust and scanty to herself alone.

‡ Such her devotion was, as might give rules

Of speculation to disputing schools,
 And teach us equally the scales to hold
 Betwixt the two extremes of hot and cold;
 That pious heat may mod'rately prevail, 110
 And we be warmed, but not be scorched with zeal.

Business might shorten, not disturb, her prayer;
 Heaven had the best, if not the greater share.

An active life long orisons forbids;
 Yet still she prayed, for still she prayed by deeds.

† *Of her humility.*—Marginal note of original edition.

‡ *Of her piety.*—Marginal note of original edition.

Her every day was sabbath; only free
 From hours of prayer, for hours of charity.
 Such as the Jews from servile toil released;
 Where works of mercy were a part of rest;
 Such as blest angels exercise above, 120
 Varied with sacred hymns and acts of love:
 Such sabbaths as that one she now enjoys,
 E'en that perpetual one, which she employs,
 (For such vicissitudes in heaven there are)
 In praise alternate, and alternate prayer.
 All this she practised here; that when she
 sprung
 Amidst the choirs, at the first sight she
 sung:
 Sung, and was sung herself in angels' lays;
 For, praising he:, they did her Maker praise.
 All offices of heaven so well she knew, 130
 Before she came, that nothing there was
 new:

And she was so familiarly received,
 As one returning, not as one arrived.

Muse, down again precipitate thy flight: *
 For how can mortal eyes sustain immortal
 light?

But as the sun in water we can bear,
 Yet not the sun, but his reflection there,
 So let us view her, here, in what she was,
 And take her image in this watery glass:
 Yet look not every lineament to see; 140
 Some will be cast in shades, and some will be
 So lamely drawn, you scarcely know 'tis
 she.

For where such various virtues we recite,
 'Tis like the milky-way, all over bright,
 But sown so thick with stars, 'tis undistin-
 guished light.

Her virtue, not her virtues, let us call;
 For one heroic comprehends them all:
 One, as a constellation is but one,
 Though 'tis a train of stars, that, rolling on,
 Rise in their turn, and in the zodiac run: 150
 Ever in motion; now 'tis Faith ascends,
 Now Hope, now Charity, that upward tends,
 And downwards with diffusive good de-
 scends.

* *Of her various virtues.*—Marginal note of first edition.

As in perfumes composed with art and cost,
 'Tis hard to say what scent is uppermost;
 Nor this part musk or civet can we call,
 Or amber, but a rich result of all;
 So she was all a sweet, whose every part,
 In due proportion mixed, proclaimed the
 Maker's art.

No single virtue we could most com-
 mend, 160
 Whether the wife, the mother, or the friend;
 For she was all, in that supreme degree,
 That as no one prevailed, so all was she.
 The several parts lay hidden in the piece;
 The occasion but exerted that, or this.

A wife as tender, and as true withal,†
 As the first woman was before her fall:
 Made for the man, of whom she was a part;
 Made to attract his eyes, and keep his heart,
 A second Eve, but by no crime accused; 170
 As beauteous, not as brittle as the first.
 Had she been first, still Paradise had been,
 And death had found no entrance by her sin.
 So she not only had preserved from ill
 Her sex and ours, but lived their pattern
 still.

Love and obedience to her lord she bore;
 She much obeyed him, but she loved him
 more:

Not awed to duty by superior sway,
 But taught by his indulgence to obey.
 Thus we love God, as author of our
 good; 180

So subjects love just kings, or so they shou'd.
 Nor was it with ingratitude returned;
 In equal fires the blissful couple burned;
 One joy possessed them both, and in one
 grief they mourned.

His passion still improved; he loved so fast,
 As if he feared each day would be her last.
 Too true a prophet to foresee the fate
 That should so soon divide their happy
 state:

When he to heaven entirely must restore
 That love, that heart, where he went halves
 before. 190

† *Of her conjugal virtues.*—Marginal note, first edition.

Yet as the soul is all in every part,
So God and he might each have all her
heart.

So had her children too ; * for Charity
Was not more fruitful, or more kind than
she :

Each under other by degrees they grew ;
A goodly perspective of distant view :
Anchises looked not with so pleased a
face,

In numbering o'er his future Roman race,
And marshalling the heroes of his name,
As, in their order, next to light they
came. 200

Nor Cybele, with half so kind an eye,
Surveyed her sons and daughters of the
sky ;

Proud, shall I say, of her immortal fruit ?
As far as pride with heavenly minds may
suit.

Her pious love excelled to all she bore ;
New objects only multiplied it more.
And as the chosen found the pearly grain
As much as every vessel could contain ;
As in the blissful vision each shall share
As much of glory as his soul can bear ; 210
So did she love, and so dispense her care.
Her eldest thus, by consequence, was best,
As longer cultivated than the rest.
The babe had all that infant care beguiles,
And early knew his mother in her smiles :
But when dilated organs let in day
To the young soul, and gave it room to
play,

At his first aptness, the maternal love
Those rudiments of reason did improve :
The tender age was pliant to command ; 220
Like wax it yielded to the forming hand :
True to the artificer, the laboured mind
With ease was pious, generous, just, and
kind :

Soft for impression, from the first prepared,
Till virtue with long exercise grew hard :
With every act confirmed, and made at last
So durable as not to be effaced,

It turned to habit ; and, from vices free,
Goodness resolved into necessity.

Thus fixed she virtue's image, that's her
own, 230

Till the whole mother in the children
shone ;

For that was their perfection : she was such,
They never could express her mind too much.
So unexhausted her perfections were,
That, for more children, she had more to
spare ;

For souls unborn, whom her untimely death
Deprived of bodies, and of mortal breath ;
And (could they take the impressions of her
mind)

Enough still left to sanctify her kind.

† Then wonder not to see this soul
extend 240

The bounds, and seek some other self, a
friend :

As swelling seas to gentle rivers glide,
To seek repose, and empty out the tide ;
So this full soul, in narrow limits pent,
Unable to contain her, sought a vent
To issue out, and in some friendly breast
Discharge her treasures, and securely rest :
To unbosom all the secrets of her heart,
Take good advice, but better to impart.

For 'tis the bliss of friendship's holy state, 250
To mix their minds, and to communicate ;
Though bodies cannot, souls can penetrate :
Fixed to her choice, inviolably true,
And wisely choosing, for she chose but few.
Some she must have ; but in no one could
find

A tally fitted for so large a mind.

The souls of friends like kings in progress
are ;

Still in their own, though from the palace far:
Thus her friend's heart her country dwelling
was,

A sweet retirement to a coarser place ; 260
Where pomp and ceremonies entered not,
Where greatness was shut out, and business
well forgot,

* *Of her love to her children.*—Marginal note in original edition.

† *Of her friendship.*—Marginal note of original edition.

This is the imperfect draught ; but short
as far

As the true height and bigness of a star
Exceeds the measures of the astronomer.
She shines above, we know ; but in what
place,
How near the throne, and Heaven's imperial
face,
By our weak optics is but vainly guessed ;
Distance and altitude conceal the rest.

* Though all these rare endowments of the
mind 270

Were in a narrow space of life confined,
The figure was with full perfection crowned,
Though not so large an orb, as truly round.

As when in glory, through the public
place,

The spoils of conquered nations were to
pass,

And but one day for triumph was allowed,
The consul was constrained his pomp to
crowd ;

And so the swift procession hurried on,
That all, though not distinctly, might be
shown :

So in the straitened bounds of life con-
fined 280

She gave but glimpses of her glorious mind
And multitudes of virtues passed along ;
Each pressing foremost in the mighty
throng,

Ambitious to be seen, and then make room
For greater multitudes that were to come.

Yet unemployed no minute slipped away ;
Moments were precious in so short a stay.
The haste of Heaven to have her was so
great,

That some were single acts, though each
complete ;

But every act stood ready to repeat. 290

Her fellow-saints with busy care will look
For her blest name in fate's eternal book ;
And, pleased to be outdone, with joy will
see

Numberless virtues, endless charity :

* *Reflections on the shortness of her life.*—
Marginal note.

But more will wonder at so short an age,
To find a blank beyond the thirtieth page :
And with a pious fear begin to doubt -
The piece imperfect, and the rest torn out.
But 'twas her Saviour's time ; and, could
there be

A copy near the Original, 'twas she.† 300

As precious gums are not for lasting fire,
They but perfume the temple, and expire :
So was she soon exhaled, and vanished
hence ;

A short sweet odour, of a vast expense.
She vanished, we can scarcely say she died ;
For but a now did heaven and earth divide :
She passed serenely with a single breath ;
This moment perfect health, the next was
death :

One sigh did her eternal bliss assure ;
So little penance needs, when souls are
almost pure.‡ 310

As gentle dreams our waking thoughts
pursue ;

Or, one dream passed, we slide into a new ;
So close they follow, such wild order keep,
We think ourselves awake, and are asleep :
So softly death succeeded life in her :
She did but dream of heaven, and she was
there.

No pains she suffered, nor expired with
noise ;

Her soul was whispered out with God's
still voice ;

As an old friend is beckoned to a feast,
And treated like a long-familiar guest. 320
He took her as He found, but found her so,
As one in hourly readiness to go : §

E'en on that day, in all her trim prepared ;
As early notice she from heaven had heard,
And some descending courier from above
Had given her timely warning to remove ;
Or counselled her to dress the nuptial room,
For on that night the bridegroom was to
come. ||

† *She died in her thirty-third year.*—Marginal
note.

‡ *The manner of her death.*—Marginal note.

§ *Her preparedness to die.*—Marginal note.

|| *She died on Whitsunday night.*—Marginal
note to original edition.

He kept his hour, and found her where she
lay

Clothed all in white, the livery of the
day : 330

Scarce had she sinned in thought, or word,
or act ;

Unless omissions were to pass for fact :
That hardly death a consequence could
draw,

To make her liable to nature's law.

And, that she died, we only have to show
The mortal part of her she left below :

The rest, so smooth, so suddenly she went,
Looked like translation through the firmam-
ent,

Or, like the fiery car on the third errand
sent.

O happy soul ! if thou canst view from
high, 340

Where thou art all intelligence, all eye.

* If looking up to God, or down to us,
Thou find'st that any way be perviews,
Survey the ruins of thy house, and see
Thy widowed, and thy orphan family :
Look on thy tender pledges left behind
And, if thou can'st a vacant minute find
From heavenly joys, that interval afford
To thy sad children, and thy mourning lord.
See how they grieve, mistaken in their
love, 350

And shed a beam of comfort from above ;
Give them, as much as mortal eyes can
bear,

A transient view of thy full glories there ;
That they with moderate sorrow may sus-
tain

And mollify their losses in thy gain.

Or else divide the grief ; for such thou wert,
That should not all relations bear a part,
It were enough to break a single heart.

† Let this suffice : nor thou, great saint,
refuse

This humble tribute of no vulgar muse : 360

Who, not by cares, or wants, or age de-
pressed,

Stems a wild deluge with a dauntless breast ;
And dares to sing thy praises in a clime
Where vice triumphs, and virtue is a crime ;
Where e'en to draw the picture of thy mind,
Is satire on the most of human kind :

Take it, while yet 'tis praise ; before my
rage,

Unsafely just, break loose on this bad age ;
So bad, that thou thyself hadst no defence
From vice, but barely by departing hence. 370

Be what, and where thou art : to wish
thy place,

Were, in the best, presumption more than
grace.

Thy relics (such thy works of mercy are)

Have, in this poem, been my holy care.

As earth thy body keeps, thy soul the sky
So shall this verse preserve thy memory ;
For thou shalt make it live, because it sings
of thee.

ON

THE DEATH OF AMYNTAS.

A PASTORAL ELEGY.

'TWAS on a joyless and a gloomy morn,
Wet was the grass, and hung with pearls
the thorn,

When Damon, who designed to pass the
day

With hounds and horns, and chase the fly-
ing prey,

Rose early from his bed ; but soon he found
The welkin pitched with sullen clouds
around,

An eastern wind, and dew upon the ground.
Thus while he stood, and sighing did survey
The fields, and cursed the ill omens of the
day,

He saw Menalcas come with heavy pace ; 10
Wet were his eyes, and cheerless was his
face :

He wrung his hands, distracted with his
care,

And sent his voice before him from afar.

* *Apostrophe to her soul.*—Marginal note to first edition.

† *Epiphonema, or close of the poem.*—Marginal note to original edition.

"Return," he cried, "return, unhappy swain,

The spongy clouds are filled with gathering rain :

The promise of the day not only crossed,
But e'en the spring, the spring itself is lost.
Amyntas—oh !"—he could not speak the rest,

Nor needed, for presaging Damon guessed.
Equal with Heaven young Damon loved the boy, 20

The boast of Nature, both his parents' joy.
His graceful form revolving in his mind ;
So great a genius, and a soul so kind,
Gave sad assurance that his fears were true ;
Too well the envy of the gods he knew :
For when their gifts too lavishly are placed,
Soon they repent, and will not make them last.

For sure it was too bountiful a dole,
The mother's features, and the father's soul.
Then thus he cried : " The morn bespoke the news : 30

The morning did her cheerful light diffuse :
But see how suddenly she changed her face,
And brought on clouds and rain, the day's disgrace ;

Just such, Amyntas, was thy promised race.
What charms adorned thy youth, where Nature smiled,

And more than man was given us in a child !

His infancy was ripe : a soul sublime
In years so tender that prevented time :
Heaven gave him all at once ; then snatched away,

Ere mortals all his beauties could survey : 40
Just like the flower that buds and withers in a day."

MENALCAS.

The mother, lovely, though with grief oppressed
Reclined his dying head upon her breast.
The mournful family stood all around ;
One groan was heard, one universal sound :
All were in floods of tears and endless sorrow drowned.

So dire a sadness sat on every look,
E'en Death repented he had given the stroke !
He grieved his fatal work had been ordained,
But promised length of life to those who yet remained. 50

The mother's and her eldest daughter's grace,

It seems, had bribed him to prolong their space.

The father bore it with undaunted soul,
Like one who durst his destiny control :
Yet with becoming grief he bore his part,
Resigned his son, but not resigned his heart.

Patient as Job ; and may he live to see,
Like him, a new-increasing family !

DAMON.

Such is my wish, and such my prophecy.
For yet, my friend, the beauteous mould remains ; 60

Long may she exercise her fruitful pains !
But, ah ! with better hap, and bring a race
More lasting, and endowed with equal grace !
Equal she may, but farther none can go :
For he was all that was exact below.

MENALCAS.

Damon, behold yon breaking purple cloud ;

Hear'st thou not hymns and songs divinely loud ?

There mounts Amyntas ; the young cherubs play

About their godlike mate, and sing him on his way.

He cleaves the liquid air, behold, he flies, 70
And every moment gains upon the skies.

The new-come guest admires the ethereal state,

The sapphire portal, and the golden gate ;
And now admitted in the shining throng,
He shows the passport which he brought along.

His passport is his innocence and grace,
Well known to all the natives of the place.

Now sing, ye joyful angels, and admire
 Your brother's voice that comes to mend
 your quire :
 Sing you, while endless tears our eyes be-
 stow ;
 For like Amyntas none is left below.

ON THE DEATH OF A VERY YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

HE who could view the book of destiny,
 And read whatever there was writ of thee,
 O charming youth, in the first opening
 page,
 So many graces in so green an age,
 Such wit, such modesty, such strength of
 mind,
 A soul at once so manly, and so kind ;
 Would wonder, when he turned the volume
 o'er,
 And after some few leaves should find no
 more,
 Nought but a blank remain, a dead void
 space,
 A step of life that promised such a race. 10
 We must not, dare not think, that Heaven
 began
 A child, and could not finish him a man ;
 Reflecting what a mighty store was laid
 Of rich materials, and a model made ;
 The cost already furnished ; so bestowed,
 As more was never to one soul allowed :
 Yet after this profusion spent in vain,
 Nothing but mouldering ashes to remain,
 I guess not, lest I split upon the shelf,
 Yet durst I guess, Heaven kept it for Him-
 self ; 20
 And giving us the use, did soon recall,
 Ere we could spare, the mighty principal.
 Thus then he disappeared, was rarified ;
 For 'tis improper speech to say he died :
 He was exhaled ; his great Creator drew
 His spirit, as the sun the morning dew.
 'Tis sin produces death ; and he had none,
 But the taint Adam left on every son.

He added not, he was so pure, so good,
 'Twas but the original forfeit of his blood : 30
 And that so little, that the river ran
 More clear than the corrupted fount began.
 Nothing remained of the first muddy clay ;
 The length of course had washed it in the
 way :

So deep, and yet so clear, we might behold
 The gravel bottom, and that bottom gold.
 As such we loved, admired, almost adored,
 Gave all the tribute mortals could afford.
 Perhaps we gave so much, the powers above
 Grew angry at our superstitious love : 40
 For when we more than human homage pay,
 The charming cause is justly snatched away.
 Thus was the crime not his, but ours
 alone :

And yet we murmur that he went so soon ;
 Though miracles are short and rarely
 shown.

Hear then, ye mournful parents, and
 divide

That love in many, which in one was tied.
 That individual blessing is no more,
 But multiplied in your remaining store.
 The flame's dispersed, but does not all ex-
 pire ; 50

The sparkles blaze, though not the globe
 of fire.

Love him by parts, in all your numerous
 race, 60

And from those parts form one collected
 grace ;

Then, when you have refined to that degree,
 Imagine all in one, and think that one is he,

YOUNG MR. ROGERS,

OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

OF gentle blood, his parents' only treasure,
 Their lasting sorrow, and their vanished
 pleasure,
 Adorned with features, virtues, wit, and
 grace,
 A large provision for so short a race ;

More moderate gifts might have prolonged
his date,
Too early fitted for a better state ;
But, knowing heaven his home, to shun
delay,
He leaped o'er age, and took the shortest
way.

ON THE

DEATH OF MR. PURCELL.*

SET TO MUSIC BY DR. BLOW.

I.

MARK how the lark and linnet sing ;
With rival notes
They strain their warbling throats,
To welcome in the spring.
But in the close of night,
When Philomel begins her heavenly lay,
They cease their mutual spite,
Drink in her music with delight,
And, list'ning, silently obey.

II.

So ceased the rival crew, when Purcell
came ;
They sung no more, or only sung his
fame :
Struck dumb, they all admired
The godlike man,
Alas ! too soon retired,
As he too late began.
We beg not hell our Orpheus to restore :
Had he been there,
Their sovereign's fear
Had sent him back before.

* Henry Purcell, our famous composer, was brought up in the King's chapel, and at the age of eighteen was made organist of Westminster Abbey, and in 1682 was one of the organists of the Chapel Royal. He set Dryden's lays to music. He was born in 1658, and died in 1695. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The power of harmony too well they
knew :
He long ere this had tuned their jarring
sphere,
And left no hell below.

III.

The heavenly choir, who heard his notes
from high,
Let down the scale of music from the sky :
They handed him along,
And all the way he taught, and all the way
they sung.
Ye brethren of the lyre, and tuneful voice,
Lament his lot ; but at your own rejoice :
Now live secure, and linger out your
days ;
The gods are pleased alone with Purcell's
lays,
Nor know to mend their choice.

EPITAPH ON

THE LADY WHITMORE.

FAIR, kind, and true, a treasure each
alone,
A wife, a mistress, and a friend in one,
Rest in this tomb, raised at thy husband's
cost,
Here sadly summing, what he had, and
lost.
Come, virgins, ere in equal bands ye join,
Come first, and offer at her sacred shrine ;
Pray but for half the virtues of this wife,
Compound for all the rest, with longer
life ;
And wish your vows, like hers, may be
returned,
So loved when living, and when dead so
mourned.

EPITAPH ON

SIR PALMES FAIRBORNE'S
TOMB

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Sacred to the immortal memory of Sir Palmes Fairborne, Knight, Governor of Tangier; in execution of which command he was mortally wounded by a shot from the Moors, then besieging the town, in the forty-sixth year of his age. October 24, 1680.

YE sacred relics, which your marble keep,
Here, undisturbed by wars, in quiet sleep :
Discharge the trust, which, when it was
below,

Fairborne's undaunted soul did undergo,
And be the town's Palladium from the
foe.

Alive and dead these walls he will defend :
Great actions great examples must attend.
The Candian siege his early valour knew,
Where Turkish blood did his young hands
imbrue.

I'rom thence returning with deserved ap-
plause,
Against the Moors his well-fleshed sword
he draws ;

The same the courage and the same the
cause.

His youth and age, his life and death,
combine,

As in some great and regular design,
All of a piece throughout, and all divine.
Still nearer heaven his virtues shone more
bright,

Like rising flames expanding in their height ;
The martyr's glory crowned the soldier's
fight.

More bravely British general never fell,
Nor general's death was e'er revenged so
well ;

Which his pleased eyes beheld before their
close,

Followed by thousand victims of his foes
To his lamented loss for time to come
His pious widow consecrates this tomb.

EPITAPH ON

A NEPHEW,*

IN CATWORTH CHURCH, HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

STAY, stranger, stay, and drop one tear.
She always weeps who laid him here ;
And will do till her race is run ;
His father's fifth, her only son.

ON THE MONUMENT OF

A FAIR MAIDEN LADY,

WHO DIED AT BATH, AND IS THERE INTERRED.†

BELOW this marble monument is laid
All that heaven wants of this celestial maid.
Preserve, O sacred tomb, thy trust con-
signed ;
The mould was made on purpose for the
mind :

And she would lose, if, at the latter day,
One atom could be mixed with other clay.
Such were the features of her heavenly face,
Her limbs were formed with such harmonious
grace ;

So faultless was the frame, as if the whole
Had been an emanation of the soul ;
Which her own inward symmetry revealed ;
And like a picture shone, in glass annealed.
Or like the sun eclipsed, with shaded light :
Too piercing, else, to be sustained by sight.

* The only son of Dryden's sister Rose, the wife of the Rev. Dr. Laughton of Catworth.

† In the Abbey Church. The epitaph is on a white marble stone fixed in the wall, together with this inscription : " Here lies the body of Mary, third daughter of Richard Frampton of Moreton, in Dorsetshire, Esq., and of Jane his wife, sole daughter of Sir Francis Cottington of Founthill, in Wilts, who was born January 1, 1676, and died after seven weeks illness on the 6th of September 1698.

This monument was erected by Catherine Frampton, her second sister and executrix, in testimony of her grief, affection, and gratitude."

Each thought was visible that rolled within :
As through a crystal case the figured hours
are seen.

And Heaven did this transparent veil provide,

Because she had no guilty thought to hide.
All white, a virgin-saint, she sought the skies :
For marriage, though it sullies not, it dyes. ²⁰
High though her wit, yet humble was her
mind ;

As if she could not, or she would not find
How much her worth transcended all her
kind.

Yet she had learned so much of heaven
below,

That, when arrived, she scarce had more
to know :

But only to refresh the former hint ;
And read her Maker in a fairer print.

So pious, that she had no time to spare
For human thoughts, but was confined to
prayer.

Yet in such charities she passed the day, ³⁰
'Twas wondrous how she found an hour to
pray.

A soul so calm, it knew not ebbs or flows,
Which passion could but curl, not discom-
pose.

A female softness, with a manly mind :

A daughter duteous, and a sister kind :

In sickness patient, and in death resigned.

EPITAPH ON

MRS. MARGARET PASTON,

OF BURNINGHAM, IN NORFOLK.

So fair, so young, so innocent, so sweet,
So ripe a judgment, and so rare a wit,
Require at least an age in one to meet.
In her they met ; but long they could not stay,
'Twas gold too fine to mix without alloy.
Heaven's image was in her so well expressed,
Her very sight upbraided all the rest ;
Too justly ravished from an age like this,
Now she is gone, the world is of a piece.

ON THE MONUMENT

OF THE

MARQUIS OF WINCHESTER.*

HE who in impious times undaunted stood,
And 'midst rebellion durst be just and good :
Whose arms asserted, and whose sufferings
more

Confirmed the cause for which he fought
before,

Rests here, rewarded by an heavenly prince
For what his earthly could not recompense.

Pray, reader, that such times no more
appear ;

Or, if they happen, learn true honour here.

Ark † of this age's faith and loyalty,

Which to preserve them, Heaven confined
in thee. ¹⁰

Few subjects could a king like thine deserve :
And fewer such a king so well could serve.

Blest king, blest subject, whose exalted state
By sufferings rose, and gave the law to fate.

Such souls are rare, but mighty patterns given
To earth, and meant for ornaments to
heaven.

* John Powlet, Marquis of Winchester, was one of the most faithful subjects of Charles I. Basing House was defended by him against the rebels. It was taken by them and levelled to the ground. After the destruction of his noble house he removed to Englefield, his house in Berkshire, where he lived till his death in 1674. This epitaph is on his monument in the beautiful church at Englefield, now belonging (with the house and estate) to Mr. Benyon. The conduct of the rebels after taking Basing House was especially disgraceful, as they killed in cold blood a young girl who was defending her father, a clergyman, from their cruelty.—ED.

He was a nobleman of great spirit and intrepidity, who withstood, in his magnificent castle of Basing, in Hampshire, an obstinate siege of two years against the rebels, who levelled it to the ground, because on every window was written *Aymur Loyauté*. He died in 1674, and was buried in the church of Englefield, in Berkshire, where his monument with this epitaph still remains. It is remarkable that Milton wrote a beautiful epitaph on the Marchioness, his lady. It was the singular lot, both of husband and wife, to have received the honour of being celebrated by two such poets.—DR. J. WARTON.

† This epitaph has been corrected from the monument at Englefield.—EDR.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST, AND
HYMNS, ETC.

NOTE.

Dryden's magnificent Ode, "Alexander's Feast," deserves a separate place, with the "Veni Creator Spiritus," the translation of the "Te Deum," and the "Hymn for St. John's Eve."

The Ode was written for the Festival of St. Cecilia, for which ten years before Dryden had composed another Ode, inferior to the one before us. St. Cecilia, a Roman Saint, is said to have drawn an angel to her side by her divine hymns, and by the strains of the organ which she invented.

A musical society in London for some years celebrated St. Cecilia's Feast annually, on her day, November 22, and an Ode composed for the festival was sung at it. Dryden supplied one in 1687 and 1697.

The "Te Deum" and "Hymn for St. John's Eve" were first published by Sir Walter Scott.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST;

OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC :

AN ODE IN HONOUR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY. 1697.

I.

TWAS at the royal feast, for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son :
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne :
His valliant peers were placed around ;
Their brows with roses and with myrtles
bound ;
(So should desert in arms be crowned.)
The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride 10
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair !
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS.

Happy, happy, happy pair !
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

II.

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre :
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.

The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above,
(Such is the power of mighty love.)
A dragon's fiery form belied the god :
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia pressed : 20
And while he sought her snowy breast :
Then, round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a
sovereign of the world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,
A present deity they shout around :
A present deity the vaulted roofs rebound :
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod, 40
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS.

With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

III.

20 The praise of Bacchus then the sweet
musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young :
The jolly god in triumph comes ;
Sound the trumpets ; beat the drums ; 20

Flushed with a purple grace
 He shows his honest face :
 Now give the hautboys breath ; he comes,
 he comes
 Bacchus, ever fair and young,
 Drinking joys did first ordain ;
 Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure :
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain. 60

CHORUS.

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure :
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain.

IV.

Soothed with the sound the king grew
 vain ;
 Fought all his battles o'er again ;
 And thrice he routed all his foes ; and thrice
 he slew the slain.
 The master saw the madness rise ;
 His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes ; 70
 And, while he heaven and earth defied,
 Changed his hand, and checked his
 pride.
 He chose a mournful muse
 Soft pity to infuse :
 He sung Darius great and good,
 By too severe a fate,
 Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
 Fallen from his high estate,
 And welt'ring in his blood ;
 Deserted, at his utmost need, 80
 By those his former bounty fed ;
 On the bare earth exposed he lies,
 With not a friend to close his eyes.
 With downcast looks the joyless victor
 sate
 Revolving in his altered soul
 The various turns of chance below ;
 And, now and then, a sigh he stole ;
 And tears began to flow.

CHORUS.

Revolving in his altered soul
 The various turns of chance below ;
 And, now and then, a sigh he stole ;
 And tears began to flow.

V.

The mighty master smiled, to see
 That love was in the next degree ;
 'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
 For pity melts the mind to love.
 Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
 Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
 War, he sung, is toil and trouble ;
 Honour, but an empty bubble ; 100
 Never ending, still beginning,
 Fighting still, and still destroying :
 If the world be worth thy winning,
 Think, oh think it worth enjoying :
 Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
 Take the good the gods provide thee.
 The many rend the skies with loud applause ;
 So Love was crowned, but Music won the
 cause.
 The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
 Gazed on the fair 110
 Who caused his care,
 And sighed and looked, sighed and
 looked,
 Sighed and looked, and sighed again :
 At length, with love and wine at once op-
 pressed,
 The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS.

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
 Gazed on the fair
 Who caused his care,
 And sighed and looked, sighed and
 looked,
 Sighed and looked, and sighed
 again : 120
 At length with love and wine at once op-
 pressed,
 The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

VI.

Now strike the golden lyre again :
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of
thunder.

Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head :
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed, he stares around. 180

"Revenge, revenge," Timotheus cries,
"See the furies arise :
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes !
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand !

Those are Grecian ghosts that in battle were
slain,

And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain : 140
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.

Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile
gods."

The princes applaud with a furious joy ;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to
destroy ;

Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another
Troy. 150

CHORUS.

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal
to destroy ;

Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another
Troy.

VII.

Thus long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute ;
Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
And sounding lyre
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft
desire. 160

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame ;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown
before.

Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown ;
He raised a mortal to the skies ;
She drew an angel down. 170

GRAND CHORUS.

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame ;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown
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Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown ;
He raised a mortal to the skies ;
She drew an angel down. 180

HYMNS, ETC.

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS,

PARAPHRASED.

CREATOR Spirit, by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid,
Come visit every pious mind ;
Come pour Thy joys on human kind ;
From sin and sorrow set us free,
And make Thy temples worthy Thee.

O Source of uncreated light,
The Father's promised Paraclete !
Thrice Holy Fount, thrice Holy Fire,
Our hearts with heavenly love inspire ; 10
Come, and Thy sacred unction bring
To sanctify us, while we sing.

Plenteous of Grace, descend from high,
Rich in Thy sevenfold energy !
Thou strength of His Almighty hand,
Whose power does heaven and earth com-
mand.

Proceeding Spirit, our defence,
Who dost the gift of tongues dispense,
And crown'st Thy gift with eloquence
Refine and purge our earthly parts ;
But, oh, inflame and fire our hearts !
Our frailties help, our vice control,
Submit the senses to the soul ;
And when rebellious they are grown,
Then lay Thy hand, and hold 'em down.

Chase from our minds the infernal foe,
And peace, the fruit of love, bestow ;
And lest our feet should step astray,
Protect and guide us in the way.

Make us eternal truths receive,
And practise all that we believe :
Give us Thyself, that we may see
The Father, and the Son, by Thee.

Immortal honour, endless fame,
Attend the Almighty Father's name :
The Saviour Son be glorified,
Who for lost man's redemption died :
And equal adoration be,
Eternal Paraclete, to Thee.

HYMN FOR ST. JOHN'S EVE,

29TH JUNE.

O SYLVAN prophet ! whose eternal fame
Echoes from Judah's hills and Jordan's
stream,
The music of our numbers raise,
And tune our voices to thy praise.

A messenger from high Olympus came
To bear the tidings of thy life and name,
And told thy sire each prodigy
That Heaven designed to work in thee.

Hearing the news, and doubting in sur-
prise,
His faltering speech in fettered accent
dies ; 10
But Providence, with happy choice,
In thee restored thy father's voice.

In the recess of Nature's dark abode,
Though still enclosed, yet knewest thou thy
God ;
Whilst each glad parent told and blessed
The secrets of each other's breast.

TE DEUM.*

THEE, Sovereign God, our grateful accents
praise ;
We own Thee Lord, and bless Thy wondrous
ways ;
To Thee, Eternal Father, earth's whole
frame
With loudest trumpets sounds immortal
fame.
Lord God of Hosts ! for Thee the heavenly
powers
With sounding anthems fill the vaulted
towers.
Thy Cherubims thrice Holy, Holy, Holy
cry ;
Thrice Holy, all the Seraphims reply,
And thrice returning echoes endless songs
supply.
Both heaven and earth Thy majesty dis-
play ;
They owe their beauty to Thy glorious
ray.
Thy praises fill the loud apostles' quire :
The train of prophets in the song conspire.
Legions of Martyrs in the chorus shine,
And vocal blood with vocal music join.
By these Thy church, inspired by heavenly
art,
Around the world maintains a second part,
And tunes her sweetest notes, O God to
Thee,

The Father of unbounded majesty ;
The Son, adored co-partner of Thy seat, ²⁰
And equal everlasting Paraclete.
Thou King of Glory, Christ, of the Most High
Thou co-eternal filial Deity ;
Thou who, to save the world's impending
doom,
Vouchsafedst to dwell within a Virgin's
womb ;
Old tyrant Death disarmed, before Thee
flew
The bolts of heaven, and back the foldings
drew,
To give access, and make Thy faithful way ;
From God's right hand Thy filial beams dis-
play.
Thou art to judge the living and the
dead ;
Then spare those souls for whom Thy veins
have bled. ³⁰
O take us up amongst Thy blessed above,
To share with them Thy everlasting
love.
Preserve, O Lord ! Thy people, and enhance
Thy blessing on Thine own inheritance.
For ever raise their hearts, and rule their
ways,
Each day we bless Thee, and proclaim Thy
praise ;
No age shall fail to celebrate Thy name,
No hour neglect Thy everlasting fame.
Preserve our souls, O Lord, this day from
ill ;
Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy still :
As we have hoped, do Thou reward our pain ;
We've hoped in Thee, let not our hope be
vain. ⁴⁰

* First published by Sir Walter Scott, who received it and the Hymn for St. John's Eve from Captain MacDonogh of the Inverness Militia.

SONGS, ODES, AND A MASQUE.

NOTE.

Dr. J. Warton, who published in 1811 an excellent and carefully annotated edition of Dryden's Poems, selected some songs from the plays to add to those in the ordinary editions.

The Editor has taken a few more from both plays and operas for insertion in this volume, believing that they have not hitherto been published apart from the dramas, which are now not read. Those from "King Arthur" are strikingly musical and patriotic.

The "Secular Masque" was written by Dryden for a performance of Fletcher's "Pilgrim" that was to be given for his benefit in 1700, and was adapted to the termination of the seventeenth century, "it being supposed," says Scott (as by many in our own time), "that the century concluded so soon as the hundredth year commenced—as if a play was ended at the beginning of the fifth act." It contains an animated description of the reigns of James I., Charles I., and Charles II., in which the influence of Diana, Mars, and Venus are supposed to have respectively predominated.

SONGS, ODES, AND A MASQUE.

THE FAIR STRANGER :

A SONG.

I.

HAPPY and free, securely blest,
No beauty could disturb my rest,
My amorous heart was in despair,
'To find a new victorious fair.

II.

Till you, descending on our plains,
With foreign force renew my chains;
Where now you rule without control
The mighty sovereign of my soul.

III.

Your smiles have more of conquering charms
Than all your native country's arms :
Their troops we can expel with ease,
Who vanquish only when we please.

IV.

But in your eyes, oh ! there's the spell,
Who can see them, and not rebel ?
You make us captives by your stay,
Yet kill us if you go away.

ON

THE YOUNG STATESMEN.

WRITTEN IN 1680.

CLARENDON had law and sense,
Clifford was fierce and brave ;
Bennet's grave look was a pretence,
And Danby's matchless impudence
Helped to support the knave.

But Sunderland,* Godolphin,† Loiy,
These will appear such chits in story,
'Twill turn all politics to jests,
To be repeated like John Dory,
When fiddlers sing at feasts.

10

Protect us, mighty Providence,
What would these madmen have ?
First, they would bribe us without pence,
Deceive us without common sense,
And without power enslave.

Shall free-born men, in humble awe,
Submit to servile shame ;
Who from consent and custom draw
The same right to be ruled by law,
Which kings pretend to reign ?

20

The Duke shall wield his conquering sword,
The Chancellor make a speech,
The King shall pass his honest word,
The pawned revenue sums afford,
And then, come kiss my breech.

* Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, was President of the Council under James II. While the King placed entire confidence in him, Sunderland was in the pay of France, and carried on secret negotiations with the Prince of Orange. This base man is said, with truth, to have advised James to do everything most likely to injure him, intending to betray him to the Prince of Orange. He turned Roman Catholic in 1687, and became, with Father Peter, of whom he made a tool, joint-adviser to the unhappy King.

Dryden in this song scornfully compares the later Ministers of Charles II. with the greater statesmen gone before, especially with Clarendon.

† Sidney Godolphin, Earl Godolphin, was Prime Minister towards the close of Charles II.'s reign. He supported the Exclusion Bill, but was

So have I seen a king on chess
 (His rooks and knights withdrawn,
 His queen and bishops in distress)
 Shifting about, grow less and less,
 With here and there a pawn.

30

A SONG

FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1687.

I.

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony
 This universal frame began :
 When nature underneath a heap
 Of jarring atoms lay,
 And could not heave her head,
 The tuneful voice was heard from high,
 Arise, ye more than dead.
 Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
 In order to their stations leap,
 And Music's power obey. 10
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony
 This universal frame began :
 From harmony to harmony
 Through all the compass of the notes it
 ran,
 The diapason closing full in Man.

II.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell ?
 When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
 His listening brethren stood around,
 And, wondering, on their faces fell
 To worship that celestial sound. 20
 Less than a God they thought there could
 not dwell
 Within the hollow of that shell,
 That spoke so sweetly and so well.
 What passion cannot Music raise and
 quell ?

nevertheless retained in office by James II., though not as Premier. He was long in correspondence with the Prince of Orange, and was kept in office after the Revolution by William III., whom he had secretly served.

III.

The trumpet's loud clangor
 Excites us to arms,
 With shrill notes of anger,
 And mortal alarms.
 The double double double beat
 Of the thundering drum 30
 Cries, hark ! the foes come ;
 Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

IV.

The soft complaining flute
 In dying notes discovers
 The woes of hopeless lovers,
 Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling
 lute.

V.

Sharp violins proclaim
 Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
 Fury, frantic indignation,
 Depth of pains, and height of passion, 40
 For the fair, disdainful, dame.

VI.

But oh ! what art can teach,
 What human voice can reach,
 The sacred organ's praise ?
 Notes inspiring holy love,
 Notes that wing their heavenly ways
 To mend the choirs above.

VII.

Orpheus could lead the savage race ;
 And trees uprooted left their place,
 Sequacious of the lyre : 50
 But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher :
 When to her organ vocal breath was given,
 An angel heard, and straight appeared
 Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS.

As from the power of sacred lays
 The spheres began to move,
 And sung the great Creator's praise
 To all the blessed above ;

So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour
The trumpet shall be heard on high, 60
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

SONG.

FAREWELL, FAIR ARMIDA.*

FAREWELL, fair Armida, my joy and my
grief,
In vain I have loved you, and hope no
relief;
Undone by your virtue, too strict and
severe,
Your eyes gave me love, and you gave me
despair :
Now called by my honour, I seek with
content
The fate which in pity you would not pre-
vent :
To languish in love, were to find by delay
A death that's more welcome the speediest
way.

On seas and in battles, in bullets and fire,
The danger is less than in hopeless de-
sire ; 10
My death's wound you give, though far off
I bear
My fall from your sight—not to cost you a
tear :
But if the kind flood on a wave should
convey,
And under your window my body should
lay,
The wound on my breast when you happen
to see,
You'll say with a sigh—it was given by me.

* Armida was supposed to have been the beautiful Frances Stuart, afterwards Duchess of Richmond ; the supposed singer a Captain Digby, who was killed in the engagement off Southwold Bay in 1672. So say at least Malone and Todd.

THE LADY'S SONG.

I.

A CHOIR of bright beauties in spring did
appear,
To choose a May-lady to govern the
year ;
All the nymphs were in white, and the
shepherds in green ;
The garland was given, and Phillis was
queen :
But Phillis refused it, and sighing did
say,
I'll not wear a garland while Pan is away.

II.

While Pan and fair Syrinx are fled from our^a
shore,
The Graces are banished, and Love is no
more :
The soft god of pleasure, that warmed our
desires,
Has broken his bow, and extinguished his
fires : 10
And vows that himself, and his mother,
will mourn,
Till Pan and fair Syrinx in triumph return.

III.

Forbear your addresses, and court us no
more,
For we will perform what the Deity swore :
But if you dare think of deserving our
charms,
Away with your sheepphooks, and take to
your arms :
Then laurels and myrtles your brows shall
adorn,
When Pan, and his son, and fair Syrinx †
return.

† This song relates evidently to James II., his queen, and son, under mythological names. Syrinx was a beautiful river-nymph beloved by Pan, and changed at her own request into a reed.

A SONG.

I.

FAIR, sweet, and young, receive a prize
 Reserved for your victorious eyes :
 From crowds, whom at your feet you see,
 Oh pity, and distinguish me !
 As I from thousand beauties more
 Distinguish you, and only you adore

II.

Your face for conquest was designed,
 Your every motion charms my mind ;
 Angels, when you your silence break,
 Forget their hymns, to hear you speak ; 10
 But when at once they hear and view,
 Are loth to mount, and long to stay with
 you.

III.

No graces can your form improve,
 But all are lost, unless you love ;
 While that sweet passion you disdain,
 Your veil and beauty are in vain :
 In pity then prevent my fate,
 For after dying all reprieve's too late.

A SONG.

HIGH state and honours to others impart,
 But give me your heart :
 That treasure, that treasure alone,
 I beg for my own.
 So gentle a love, so fervent a fire,
 My soul does inspire ;
 That treasure, that treasure alone,
 I beg for my own.
 Your love let me crave ;
 Give me in possessing 10
 So matchless a blessing ;
 That empire is all I would have.
 Love's my petition,
 All my ambition ;

If e'er you discover
 So faithful a lover,
 So real a flame,
 I'll die, I'll die,
 So give up my game.

A SONG.

I.

Go tell Amynta, gentle swain,
 I would not die, nor dare complain :
 Thy tuneful voice with numbers join,
 Thy words will more prevail than mine,
 To souls oppressed, and dumb with 10
 grief,
 The gods ordain this kind relief ;
 That music should in sounds convey,
 What dying lovers dare not say.

II.

A sigh or tear, perhaps, she'll give,
 But love on pity cannot live. 10
 Tell her that hearts for hearts were
 made,
 And love with love is only paid.
 Tell her my pains so fast increase,
 That soon they will be past redress ;
 But ah ! the wretch, that speechless lies,
 Attends but death to close his eyes.

A SONG

TO A FAIR YOUNG LADY GOING OUT OF THE
 TOWN IN THE SPRING.

I.

ASK not the cause, why sullen Spring
 So long delays her flowers to bear ;
 Why warbling birds forget to sing,
 And winter storms invert the year :
 Chloris is gone, and Fate provides 10
 To make it Spring, where she resides,

II.

Chloris is gone, the cruel fair;
 She cast not back a pitying eye:
 But left her lover in despair,
 To sigh, to languish, and to die. 10
 Ah, how can those fair eyes endure
 To give the wounds they will not cure!

III.

Great god of love, why hast thou made
 A face that can all hearts command,
 That all religions can invade,
 And change the laws of every land?
 Where thou hadst placed such power before,
 Thou shouldst have made her mercy more.

IV.

When Chloris to the temple comes,
 Adoring crowds before her fall; 20
 She can restore the dead from tombs,
 And every life but mine recall.
 I only am by Love designed
 To be the victim for mankind.

THE SECULAR MASQUE.

Enter JANUS.

JANUS.

CHRONOS, Chronos, mend thy pace,
 An hundred times the rolling sun
 Around the radiant belt has run
 In his revolving race.
 Behold, behold, the goal in sight,
 Spread thy fans, and wing thy flight.

Enter CHRONOS with a scythe in his hand, and a globe on his back, which he sets down at his entrance.

CHRONOS.

Weary, weary of my weight,
 Let me, let me drop my freight,
 And leave the world behind.
 I could not bear, 10
 Another year,
 The load of human-kind.

Enter MOMUS laughing.

MOMUS.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! well hast thou
 done
 To lay down thy pack,
 And lighten thy back,
 The world was a fool, e'er since it begun,
 And since neither Janus, nor Chronos, nor I,
 Can hinder the crimes,
 Or mend the bad times,
 'Tis better to laugh than to cry. 20

CHORUS OF ALL THREE.

'Tis better to laugh than to cry.

JANUS.

Since Momus comes to laugh below,
 Old Time begin the show,
 That he may see, in every scene,
 What changes in this age have been.

CHRONOS.

Then goddess of the silver bow begin.

[*Horns, or hunting-music within.*]

Enter DIANA.

DIANA.

With horns and with hounds, I waken the
 day;
 And hie to the woodland-walks away:
 I tuck up my robe, and am buskined soon,
 And tie to my forehead a waxing moon. 30
 I course the fleet stag, unkennel the fox,
 And chase the wild goats o'er summits of
 rocks,
 With shouting and hooting we pierce
 through the sky,
 And Echo turns hunter, and doubles the cry.

CHORUS OF ALL.

With shouting and hooting we pierce
 through the sky,
 And Echo turns hunter, and doubles the cry.

JANUS.

Then our age was in its prime:

CHRONOS.

Free from rage :

DIANA.

And free from crime :

MOMUS.

A very merry, dancing, drinking, 40
Laughing, quaffing, and unthinking time.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Then our age was in its prime,
Free from rage and free from crime,
A very merry, dancing, drinking,
Laughing, quaffing, and unthinking time.

[Dance of DIANA's attendants.]

Enter MARS.

MARS.

Inspire the vocal brass, inspire ;
The world is past its infant age :
Arms and honour,
Arms and honour, 50
Set the martial mind on fire,
And kindle manly rage.
Mars has looked the sky to red ;
And Peace, the lazy good, is fled.
Plenty, peace, and pleasure fly ;
The sprightly green,
In woodland-walks no more is seen ;
The sprightly green has drunk the Tyrian
dye.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Plenty, peace, &c.

MARS.

Sound the trumpet, beat the drum ;
Through all the world around, 60
Sound a reveillé, sound, sound,
The warrior god is come.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Sound the trumpet, &c.

MOMUS.

Thy sword within the scabbard keep,
And let mankind agree ;
Better the world were fast asleep,
Than kept awake by thee.

The fools are only thinner,
With all our cost and care ;
But neither side a winner, 70
For things are as they were.

CHORUS OF ALL.

The fools are only, &c.

Enter VENUS.

VENUS.

Calms appear, when storms are past ;
Love will have his hour at last :
Nature is my kindly care ;
Mars destroys, and I repair ;
Take me, take me, while you may,
Venus comes not every day.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Take her, take her, &c.

CHRONOS.

The world was then so light, 80
I scarcely felt the weight ;
Joy ruled the day, and Love the night.
But, since the queen of pleasure left the
ground,
I faint, I lag,
And feebly drag
The ponderous orb around.

MOMUS.

All, all of a piece throughout :
Thy chase had a beast in view ;
[Pointing to Diana.
Thy wars brought nothing about ;
[To Mars.
Thy lovers were all untrue. 90
[To Venus.

JANUS.

Tis well an old age is out.

CHRONOS.

And time to begin a new.

CHORUS OF ALL.

All, all of a piece throughout ;
Thy chase had a beast in view ;

Thy wars brought nothing about ;
 Thy lovers were all untrue.
 'Tis well an old age is out,
 And time to begin a new.

[*Dance of huntsmen, nymphs, warriors, and lovers.*]

SONG

OF A SCHOLAR AND HIS MISTRESS,

WHO, BEING CROSSED BY THEIR FRIENDS, FELL
 MAD FOR ONE ANOTHER, AND NOW FIRST
 MEET IN BEDLAM.

[*Music within.*]

[*The Lovers enter at opposite doors, each held
 by a Keeper.*]

PHILLIS.

LOOK, look, I see—I see my love appear !
 'Tis he—'tis he alone ;
 For, like him, there is none :
 'Tis the dear, dear man, 'tis thee, dear.

AMYNTAS.

Hark ! the winds war ;
 The foamy waves roar ;
 I see a ship afar,
 Tossing and tossing, and making to the
 shore :

But what's that I view,
 So radiant of hue, 10
 St. Hermo, St. Hermo* that sits upon the
 sails ?

Ah ! No, no, no.
 St. Hermo never, never shone so bright ;
 'Tis Phillis, only Phillis, can shoot so fair
 a light ;
 'Tis Phillis, 'tis Phillis, that saves the ship
 alone,
 For all the winds are hushed, and the storm
 is overblown.

PHILLIS.

Let me go, let me run, let me fly to his arms.

* St. Elmo, the light that settles on masts or
 on the points of spears in the Mediterranean.

AMYNTAS.

If all the fates combine,
 And all the furies join,
 I'll force my way to Phillis, and break
 through the charms. 20
 [*Here they break from their keepers, run to each
 other, and embrace.*]

PHILLIS.

Shall I marry the man I love ?
 And shall I conclude my pains ?
 Now blessed be the Powers above,
 I feel the blood bound in my veins ;
 With a lively leap it began to move,
 And the vapours leave my brains.

AMYNTAS.

Body joined to body, and heart joined to
 heart,
 To make sure of the cure,
 Go call the man in black, to mumble o'er
 his part.

PHILLIS.

But suppose he should stay—— 30

AMYNTAS.

At worst if he delay,
 'Tis a work must be done,
 We'll borrow but a day,
 And the better, the sooner begun.

CHORUS OF BOTH.

At worse if he delay, &c.
 [*They run out together hand in hand.*]

SONG.†

IN "THE INDIAN EMPEROR."

AH fading joy ! how quickly art thou past !
 Yet we thy ruin haste.
 As if the cares of human life were few,
 We seek out new :
 And follow fate, which would too fast pursue.

† These songs were first added to Dryden's
 collected poems by Dr. J. Warton. He gathered
 them from Dryden's plays. A few more have been
 added in this edition, also from the plays.

See, how on every bough the birds express,
 In their sweet notes, their happiness.
 They all enjoy, and nothing spare;
 But on their mother Nature lay their care:
 Why then should man, the lord of all
 below, 10
 Such troubles choose to know,
 As none of all his subjects undergo?

Hark, hark, the waters fall, fall, fall,
 And with a murmuring sound
 Dash, dash, upon the ground,
 To gentle slumbers call.

SONG.

IN "THE INDIAN EMPEROR."

I LOOKED and saw within the book of fate,
 When many days did lour,
 When lo! one happy hour
 Leaped up, and smiled to save the sinking
 state;
 A day shall come when in thy power
 Thy cruel foes shall be;
 Then shall thy land be free:
 And thou in peace shall reign;
 But take, oh take that opportunity,
 Which once refused will never come again. 10

A CHARM.

FROM "THE INDIAN EMPEROR."

THOU Moon, that aidest us with thy magic
 might,
 And ye, small stars, the scattered seeds of
 light,
 Dart your pale beams into this gloomy
 place,
 That the sad powers of the infernal race
 May read above what's hid from human
 eyes,
 And in your walks see empires fall and rise.

And ye, immortal souls, who once were
 men,
 And now resolved to elements again,
 Who wait for mortal frames in depths
 below,
 And did before what we are doomed
 to now; 10
 Once, twice, and thrice I wave my sacred
 wand
 Ascend—ascend—ascend, at my command.

SONG.

IN "THE MAIDEN QUEEN."

I FEED a flame within, which so tor-
 ments me,
 That it both pains my heart, and yet con-
 tents me:
 'Tis such a pleasing smart, and I so
 love it,
 That I had rather die, than once remove it.
 Yet he, for whom I grieve, shall never know
 it;
 My tongue does not betray, nor my eyes
 show it.
 Not a sigh, nor a tear, my pain discloses,
 But they fall silently, like dew on roses.
 Thus, to prevent my love from being
 cruel,
 My heart's the sacrifice, as 'tis the fuel: 10
 And while I suffer this to give him quiet,
 My faith rewards my love, though he
 deny it.
 On his eyes will I gaze, and there delight
 me:
 Where I conceal my love no frown can
 fright me:
 To be more happy, I dare not aspire;
 Nor can I fall more low, mounting no
 higher.

SONG.

IN THE FIRST PART OF "THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA."

I.

WHEREVER I am, and whatever I do,
 My Phillis is still in my mind ;
 When angry, I mean not to Phillis to go,
 My feet, of themselves, the way find :
 Unknown to myself I am just at her door,
 And, when I would rail, I can bring out no
 more,
 'Than, Phillis, too fair and unkind !

II.

When Phillis I see, my heart bounds in my
 breast,
 And the love I would stifle is shown ;
 But asleep, or awake, I am never at
 rest, 10
 When from my eyes Phillis is gone.
 Sometimes a sad dream does delude my sad
 mind ;
 But, alas ! when I wake, and no Phillis I
 find,
 How I sigh to myself all alone !

III.

Should a king be my rival in her I adore,
 He should offer his treasure in vain :
 Oh, let me alone to be happy and poor,
 And give me my Phillis again !
 Let Phillis be mine, and but ever be
 kind,
 I could to a desert with her be confined, 20
 And envy no monarch his reign.

IV.

Alas ! I discover too much of my love,
 And she too well knows her own power !
 She makes me each day a new martyrdom
 prove,
 And makes me grow jealous each hour :

But let her each minute torment my poor
 mind,
 I had rather love Phillis, both false and
 unkind,
 Than ever be freed from her power.

SONG.

N TWO PARTS.

IN THE SECOND PART OF "THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA."

I.

He. How unhappy a lover am I,
 While I sigh for my Phillis in vain
 All my hopes of delight
 Are another man's right,
 Who is happy, while I am in pain.

II.

She. Since her honour allows no relief,
 But to pity the pains which you bear,
 'Tis the best of your fate,
 In a hopeless estate,
 To give o'er, and betimes to despair. 10

III.

He. I have tried the false med'cine in
 vain ;
 For I wish what I hope not to win :
 From without, my desire
 Has no food to its fire ;
 But it burns and consumes me within.

IV.

She. Yet, at least, 'tis a pleasure to know
 That you are not unhappy alone :
 For the nymph you adore
 Is as wretched, and more ;
 And counts all your sufferings her
 own. 20

V.

He. O ye gods, let me suffer for both ;
At the feet of my Phillis I'll lie :
I'll resign up my breath,
And take pleasure in death,
To be pitied by her when I die.

VI.

She. What her honour denied you in life,
In her death she will give to your love ;
Such a flame as is true
After fate will renew,
For the souls to meet closer above. 30

SONG OF THE SEA-FIGHT.

IN "AMBOYNA."

WHO ever saw a noble sight,
That never viewed a brave sea-fight !
Hang up your bloody colours in the air,
Up with your fights, and your nettings
prepare ;
Your merry mates cheer, with a lusty bold
spright,
Now each man his brindice, and then to the
fight.
St. George, St. George, we cry ;
The shouting Turks reply.
Oh now it begins, and the gunroom grows
hot,
Ply it with culverin and with small shot ; 10
Hark, does it not thunder ? no, 'tis the
guns roar,
The neighbouring billows are turned into
gore ;
Now each man must resolve to die,
For here the coward cannot fly.
Drums and trumpets toll the knell,
And culverins the passing bell.
Now, now they grapple, and now board
again ;
Blow up the hatches, they're off all
again :

Give them a broadside, the dice run at all,
Down comes the mast and yard, and tack-
lings fall ;
She grows giddy now, like blind Fortune's
wheel,
She sinks there, she sinks, she turns up her
keel.
Who ever beheld so noble a sight,
As this so brave, so bloody sea-fight !

INCANTATION.

IN "ÆDIPUS."

Tir. CHOOSE the darkest part o' the
grove,
Such as ghosts at noon-day love.
Dig a trench, and dig it nigh
Where the bones of Laius lie ;
Altars raised of turf or stone,
Will th' infernal pow'rs have none ;
Answer me, if this be done ?
All Pr. 'Tis done.
Tir. Is the sacrifice made fit ?
Draw her backward to the pit : 10
Draw the barren heifer back ;
Barren let her be, and black.
Cut the curled hair that grows
Full betwixt her horns and brows :
And turn your faces from the sun ;
Answer me, if this be done ?
All Pr. 'Tis done.
Tir. Pour in blood, and blood-like
wine,
To Mother Earth and Proserpine :
Mingle milk into the stream ; 20
Feast the ghosts, that love the steam :
Snatch a brand, from funeral pile :
Toss it in, to make them boil :
And turn your faces from the sun ;
Answer me, if this be done ?
All Pr. 'Tis done.
Hear, ye sullen powers below ;
Hear, ye taskers of the dead !
You that boiling cauldrons blow,
You that scum the molten lead, 30

You that pinch with red-hot tongs,
 You that drive the trembling hosts,
 Of poor, poor ghosts,
 With your sharpened prongs ;
 You that thrust them off the brim
 You that plunge them when they swim
 Till they drown ;
 Till they go
 On a row,
 Down, down, down ;
 Ten thousand thousand thousand fathoms
 down. 40

Music for a while
 Shall your cares beguile ;
 Wondering how your pains were eased,
 And disdaining to be pleased,
 Till Alecto free the dead
 From their eternal bands ;
 Till the snakes drop from her head
 And whip from out her hands.
 Come away,
 Do not stay, 50
 But obey,
 While we play,
 For hell's broke up, and ghosts have
 holiday.

Hear, hear, hear !
 Hear and appear !
 By the Fates that spun thy thread !

Chorus—Which are three.
 By the Furies fierce and dread !

Chorus—Which are three.
 By the judges of the dead ! 60

Chorus—Which are three
 Three times three !
 By hell's blue flame ;
 By the Stygian lake ;
 And by Demogorgon's name,
 At which ghosts quake,
 Hear and appear !

SONG TO APOLLO.

FROM "ŒDIPUS."

PHŒBUS, god beloved by men,
 At thy dawn, every beast is roused in
 his den ;
 At thy setting, all birds of thy absence
 complain,
 And we die, all die, till the morning
 comes again.

Phœbus, god beloved by men !
 Idol of the eastern kings,
 Awful as the God who flings
 His thunder round and the lightning
 wings ;
 God of songs, and Orphean strings,
 Who to this mortal bosom brings 10
 All harmonious heavenly things !
 Thy drowsy prophet to revive,
 Ten thousand thousand forms before him
 drive :
 With chariots and horsemen all o' fire
 awake him,
 Convulsions and furies and prophecies
 shake him.
 Let him tell it in groans, though he bend
 with the load,
 Though he burst with the weight of the
 terrible god.

FERDINAND AND ARIEL'S SONG.

IN THE "TEMPEST."

WHEN the winds whistle, and when the
 streams creep,
 Under yon willow-tree fain would I
 sleep.

Then let me alone
 For 'tis time to be gone.

Ariel. For 'tis time to be gone.

What cares or pleasures can be in this
isle?

Within this desert place,
There lives no human race;
Fate cannot frown here, nor kind fortune
smile. 10

Ariel. Kind fortune smiles, and she
Has yet in store for thee
Some strange felicity.
Follow, follow me
And thou shalt see.

SONG OF THE DEMON.

FROM "THE TEMPEST."

ARISE, arise! ye subterranean winds,
More to disturb their guilty minds;
And all ye filthy damps and vapours rise,
Which use to infect the earth, and trouble
all the skies;
Rise you, from whom devouring plagues
have birth;
You, that in the vast and hollow womb of
earth
Engender earthquakes, make whole coun-
tries shake,
And stately cities into deserts turn;
And you, who feed the flames by which
earth's entrails burn.
Ye raging winds, whose rapid force can
make 10
All but the fixed and solid centre shake,
Come drive these wretches to that part of
the isle,
Where Nature never yet did smile;
Cause fogs and storms, whirlwinds and
earthquakes there;
There let them howl and languish in despair,
Rise, and obey the powerful prince of the
air.

A SONG FROM THE ITALIAN.

FROM "LIMBERHAM."

By a dismal cypress lying,
Damon cried, all pale and dying—
"Kind is death that ends my pain,
But cruel she I loved in vain.
The mossy fountains
Murmur my trouble,
And hollow mountains
My groans redouble:
Every nymph mourns me
Thus while I languish; 10
She only scorns me,
Who caused my anguish,
No love returning me, but all hope deny-
ing."

By a dismal cypress lying,
Like a swan, so sung he dying—
"Kind is death, that ends my pain,
But cruel she I loved in vain!"

SONG OF THE NEREIDS.

ADDRESSED TO ALBION; FROM "ALBION * AND
ALBANIUS."

FROM the low palace of old Father Ocean,
Come we in pity your cares to deplore;
Sea-racing dolphins are trained for our
motion,
Moony tides swelling to roll us ashore.

Every nymph of the flood, her tresses
rending,
Throws off her armlet of pearl in the
main;
Neptune in anguish his charge unattend-
ing,
Vessels are foundering, and vows are in
vain.

* Albion represented Charles II., Albanus his
brother James.

SONG.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANUS."

CEASE, Augusta ! cease thy mourning,
 Happy days appear,
 God-like Albion is returning,
 Loyal hearts to cheer !
 Every grace his youth adorning,
 Glorious as the star of morning,
 Or the planet of the year.

SONG.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANUS."

ALBION, by the nymphs attended,
 Was to Neptune recommended,
 Peace and plenty spread the sails ;
 Venus, in her shell before him,
 From the sands in safety bore him,
 And supplied Etesian gales.
 Archon, on the shore commanding,
 Lowly met him at his landing,
 Crowds of people swarmed around ;
 Welcome, rang like peals of thunder,
 Welcome, rent the skies asunder,
 Welcome, heaven and earth resound.

SONG.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANUS."

INFERNAL offspring of the Night,
 Debarred of heaven your native right,
 And from the glorious fields of light,
 Condemned in shades to drag the chain,
 And fill with groans the gloomy plain ;
 Since pleasures here are none below,
 Be ill our good, our joy be woe ;

Our work t'embroil the worlds above,
 Disturb their union, disunite their love,
 And blast the beauteous frame of our
 victorious foe. 10

SONG.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANUS."

SEE the god of seas attends thee,
 Nymphs divine, a beauteous train ;
 All the calmer gales befriend thee
 In thy passage o'er the main :
 Every maid her locks is binding,
 Every Triton's horn is winding,
 Welcome to the watery plain.

SONG.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANUS."

I.

ALBION, loved of gods and men,
 Prince of Peace too mildly reigning,
 Cease thy sorrow and complaining,
 Thou shalt be restored again :
 Albion, loved of gods and men.

II.

Still thou art the care of Heaven,
 In thy youth to exile driven :
 Heaven thy ruin then prevented,
 Till the guilty land repented :
 In thy age, when none could aid thee, 10
 Foes conspired, and friends betrayed thee.
 To the brink of danger driven,
 Still thou art the care of Heaven.

ODE.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

WODEN, first to thee
A milk-white steed, in battle won,
We have sacrificed.

Chorus—We have sacrificed.

Let our next oblation be
To Thor, thy thundering son,
Of such another.

Chorus—We have sacrificed.

The white horse neighed aloud.
To Woden thanks we render ;
To Woden we have vowed,
To Woden, our defender.

The lot is cast, and Taufan pleased.

Chorus—Of mortal cares you shall be
eased.

Brave souls, to be renowned in story.
Honour prizing,
Death despising ;
Fame acquiring,
By expiring ;

Die, and reap the fruit of glory,
Brave souls, to be renowned in story.

I call ye all
To Woden's hall ;
Your temples round
With ivy bound,
In goblets crowned,
And plenteous bowls of burnished
gold ;
Where you shall laugh,
And dance and quaff
The juice that makes the Britons bold. 20

SONG.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

Where a battle is supposed to be given behind
the scenes, with drums, trumpets, and mili-
tary shouts and excursions ; after which the
Britons, expressing their joy for the victory,
sing this song of triumph:

COME, if you dare, our trumpets sound ;
Come, if you dare, the foes rebound :
We come, we come, we come, we come,
Says the double, double, double beat of the
thundering drum.

Now they charge on amain,

Now they rally again :

The gods from above the mad labour behold,
And pity mankind, that will perish for gold. 10

The fainting Saxons quit their ground,
Their trumpets languish in the sound : 10
They fly, they fly, they fly, they fly ;
Victoria, Victoria, the bold Britons cry.

Now the victory's won,

To the plunder we run :

We return to our lasses like fortunate
traders,

Triumphant with spoils of the vanquished
invaders.

THE WARNING.

FROM "KING ARTHUR."

HITHER this way, this way bend,
Trust not that malicious fiend ;
Those are false deluding lights,
Wafted far and near by sprites.
Trust them not for they'll deceive ye,
And in bogs and marshes leave ye.
If you step, no danger thinking,
Down you fall, a furlong sinking ;
'Tis a fiend, who has annoyed ye,
Name but Heaven, and he'll avoid ye. 10

SONG OF THE MISLEADING SPIRIT.

LET not a moon-born elf mislead ye
From your prey and from your glory.
Too far, alas, he has betrayed ye :
Follow the flames that wave before ye ;
Sometimes seven, sometimes one ;
Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

See, see the footsteps plain appearing,
That way Oswald chose for flying ;
Firm is the turf, and fit for bearing,
Where yon pearly dew is lying. 10
Far he cannot hence be gone,
Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

THE SONG OF HONOUR.

FROM "KING ARTHUR."

ST. GEORGE, the patron of our isle,
A soldier and a saint,
On that auspicious Order smile,
Which love and arms will plant.

Our natives not alone appear
To court this martial prize ;
But foreign kings, adopted here,
Their crowns at home despise.

Our Sovereign high, in awful state,
His honours shall bestow ;
And see his sceptred subjects wait
On his commands below. 10

SONG.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

Man sings. OH sight, the mother of desires,
What charming objects dost thou yield !
'Tis sweet, when tedious night expires,
To see the rosy morning gild

The mountain-tops, and paint the field !
But when Clarinda comes in sight,
She makes the summer's day more bright ;
And when she goes away, 'tis night.

Chor. When fair Clarinda comes in sight, &c.

Wom. sings. 'Tis sweet the blushing morn
to view ; 10

And plains adorned with pearly dew :
But such cheap delights to see,
Heaven and nature
Give each creature :

They have eyes, as well as we :
This is the joy, all joys above,
To see, to see,
That only she,
That only she we love !

Chor. This is the joy, all joys above, &c. 20

SONG.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

Two daughters of this aged stream are
we ;

And both our sea-green locks have combed
for thee ;

Come bathe with us an hour or two,
Come naked in, for we are so :

What danger from a naked foe ?

Come bathe with us, come bathe and
share 10

What pleasures in the floods appear ;
We'll beat the waters till they bound,
And circle round, around, around,
And circle round, around. 10

SONGS TO BRITANNIA.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

SONG I.

YE blustering brethren of the skies,
 Whose breath has ruffled all the watery
 plain,
 Retire, and let Britannia rise,
 In triumph o'er the main,
 Serene and calm, and void of fear,
 The Queen of Islands must appear !
 Serene and calm, as when the Spring
 The new-created world began,
 And birds on boughs did softly sing
 Their peaceful homage paid to man ; 10
 While Eurus did his blasts forbear,
 In favour of the tender year.
 Retreat, rude winds, retreat
 To hollow rocks, your stormy seat ;
 There swell your lungs, and vainly,
 vainly threat.

SONG II.

FOR folded flocks, on fruitful plains,
 The shepherd's and the farmer's
 gains,
 Fair Britain all the world outvies ;
 And Pan, as in Arcadia, reigns,
 Where pleasure mixed with profit
 lies.

Though Jason's fleece was famed of
 old,
 The British wool is growing gold ;
 No mines can more of wealth supply ;
 It keeps the peasant from the cold,
 And takes for kings the Tyrian dye. 10

SONG III.

FAIREST isle, all isles excelling,
 Seat of pleasures and of loves :
 Venus here will choose her dwelling,
 And forsake her Cyprian groves.

Cupid from his favourite nation,
 Care and envy will remove ;
 Jealousy, that poisons passion,
 And despair, that dies for love.

Gentle murmurs, sweet complaining,
 Sighs, that blow the fire of love ; 10
 Soft repulses, kind disdainings,
 Shall be all the pains you prove

Every swain shall pay his duty,
 Grateful every nymph shall prove ;
 And as these excel in beauty,
 Those shall be renowned for love.

SONG OF JEALOUSY.

IN "LOVE TRIUMPHANT."

WHAT state of life can be so blest
 As love, that warms a lover's breast ?
 Two souls in one, the same desire
 To grant the bliss, and to require !
 But if in heaven a hell we find,
 'Tis all from thee,
 O Jealousy !
 'Tis all from thee,
 O Jealousy !

Thou tyrant, tyrant Jealousy, 10
 Thou tyrant of the mind !

All other ills, though sharp they prove,
 Serve to refine, and perfect love :
 In absence, or unkind disdain,
 Sweet hope relieves the lover's pain.
 But, ah ! no cure but death we find,

To set us free
 From Jealousy :
 O Jealousy !
 Thou tyrant, tyrant Jealousy, 20
 Thou tyrant of the mind !

False in thy glass all objects are,
Some set too near, and some too
far ;

Thou art the fire of endless night,
The fire that burns, and gives no
light.

All torments of the damned we
find

In only thee,

O Jealousy !

Thou tyrant, tyrant Jealousy,

Thou tyrant of the mind !

20

HYMN.

FROM "SPANISH PRIAR."

Look down, ye blessed above, look down,
Behold our weeping matrons' tears,
Behold our tender virgin's fears,
And with success our armies crown.

Look down, ye blessed above, look down ;
Oh ! save us, save us, and our state
restore ;

For pity, pity, pity, we implore :
For pity, pity, pity, we implore. *

FABLES.

TRANSLATED FROM CHAUCER AND BOCCACCIO.

NOTE.

The first edition of these Tales was published in 1700, in folio. Ninety-seven years afterwards they were republished, with engravings from the pencil of Lady Diana Beauclerc—also in folio.

In these poems Dryden gave the first example of a mode of writing that the Italians called refacimento ; a renovation of ancient writers by modernising their language. This has been admirably done by him for Chaucer, in a free, untrammelled style, in which he occasionally “ amplifies, and frequently embellishes his author.”

The “ Character of a Good Parson,” one of the most delightful sketches in our language, was recommended to Dryden for refacimento by Pepys, the diarist, who was one of his intimate friends, and who to much simplicity of character seems to have united a good critical judgment, as well as a good business capacity.

Giovanni Boccaccio (or Boccace, as his name was then anglicised) was a celebrated Italian novelist, whose “ Decamerone ” is well known.

There is a tradition that Chaucer, when on the Continent on business for his king, met Petrarch and heard from him the story of l'atient Grizel. It is certain that Chaucer took many of his Tales from Boccaccio's “ Theseide.”

The Fables are the most popular of Dryden's poems ; and in them his power of versification is most remarkably manifested. We have, therefore, placed them before the Prologues and Epilogues ; though they (the Fables) were the poet's last great work.

FABLES.

FROM CHAUCER AND BOCCACCIO.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ORMOND.

Anno 1699.

MY LORD,

SOME estates are held in England by paying a fine at the change of every lord. I have enjoyed the patronage of your family, from the time of your excellent grandfather to this present day. I have dedicated the translation of the Lives of Plutarch to the first Duke; and have celebrated the memory of your heroic father. Though I am very short of the age of Nestor, yet I have lived to a third generation of your house; and by your Grace's favour am admitted still to hold from you by the same tenure.

I am not vain enough to boast that I have deserved the value of so illustrious a line; but my fortune is the greater, that for three descents they have been pleased to distinguish my poems from those of other men; and have accordingly made me their peculiar care. May it be permitted me to say, that as your grandfather and father were cherished and adorned with honours by two successive monarchs, so I have been esteemed and patronised by the grandfather, the father, and the son descended from one of the most ancient, most conspicuous, and most deserving families in Europe.

It is true, that by delaying the payment of my last fine, when it was due by your Grace's accession to the titles and patrimonies of your house, I may seem, in rigour of law, to have made a forfeiture of my claim; yet my heart has always been devoted to your service; and since you have been graciously pleased, by your permission of this address, to accept the tender of my duty, it is not yet too late to lay these poems at your feet.

The world is sensible that you worthily succeed not only to the honours of your ancestors, but also to their virtues. The long chain of magnanimity, courage, easiness of access, and desire of doing good, even to the prejudice of your fortune, is so far from being broken in your Grace, that the precious metal yet runs pure to the newest link of it; which I will not call the last, because I hope and pray it may descend to late posterity; and your flourishing youth, and that of your excellent Duchess, are happy omens of my wish.

It is observed by Livy and by others, that some of the noblest Roman families retained a resemblance of their ancestry, not only in their shapes and features, but also in their manners, their qualities, and the distinguishing characters of their minds. Some lines were noted for a stern, rigid virtue, savage, haughty, parsimonious, and unpopular:

others were more sweet and affable, made of a more pliant paste, humble, courteous, and obliging ; studious of doing charitable offices, and diffusive of the goods which they enjoyed. The last of these is the proper and indelible character of your Grace's family. God Almighty has endued you with a softness, a beneficence, an attractive behaviour winning on the hearts of others ; and so sensible of their misery, that the wounds of fortune seem not inflicted on them, but on yourself. You are so ready to redress, that you almost prevent their wishes, and always exceed their expectations ; as if what was yours was not your own, and not given you to possess, but to bestow on wanting merit. But this is a topic which I must cast in shades, lest I offend your modesty, which is so far from being ostentatious of the good you do, that it blushes even to have it known ; and therefore I must leave you to the satisfaction and testimony of your own conscience, which, though it be a silent panegyric, is yet the best.

You are so easy of access, that Poplicola was not more, whose doors were opened on the outside to save the people even the common civility of asking entrance ; where all were equally admitted ; where nothing that was reasonable was denied ; where misfortune was a powerful recommendation, and where I can scarce forbear saying that want itself was a powerful mediator, and was next to merit.

The history of Peru assures us, that their Incas, above all their titles, esteemed that the highest, which called them Lovers of the Poor : a name more glorious than the Felix, Pius, and Augustus of the Roman Emperors : which were epithets of flattery, deserved by few of them, and not running in a blood like the perpetual gentleness and inherent goodness of the ORMOND Family.

Gold, as it is the purest, so it is the softest and most ductile of all metals. Iron, which is the hardest, gathers rust, corrodes itself, and is therefore subject to corruption : it was never intended for coins and medals, or to bear the faces and inscriptions of the great. Indeed it is fit for armour, to bear off insults, and preserve the wearer in the day of battle ; but the danger once repelled, it is laid aside by the brave, as a garment too rough for civil conversation : a necessary guard in war, but too harsh and cumbersome in peace, and which keeps off the embraces of a more humane life.

For this reason, my lord, though you have courage in an heroic degree, yet I ascribe it to you but as your second attribute : mercy, beneficence, and compassion, claim precedence, as they are first in the Divine Nature. An intrepid courage, which is inherent in your Grace, is at best but a holiday kind of virtue, to be seldom exercised, and never but in cases of necessity : affability, mildness, tenderness, and a word, which I would fain bring back to its original signification of virtue, I mean good-nature, are of daily use ; they are the bread of mankind, and staff of life : neither sighs, nor tears, nor groans, nor curses of the vanquished follow acts of compassion and of charity ; but a sincere pleasure and sincerity of mind in him who performs an action of mercy, which cannot suffer the misfortunes of another without redress, lest they should bring a kind of contagion along with them, and pollute the happiness which he enjoys.

Yet since the perverse tempers of mankind, since oppression on one side, and ambition on the other, are sometimes the unavoidable occasions of war ; that courage, that magnanimity, and resolution, which is born with you, cannot be too much commended. And here it grieves me that I am scanted in the pleasure of dwelling on many of your actions ; but *αἰδέομαι Τρώας* is an expression which Tully often uses, when he would do what he dares not, and fears the censure of the Romans.

I have sometimes been forced to amplify on others ; but here, where the subject is so fruitful, that the harvest overcomes the reaper, I am shortened by my chain, and can

only see what is forbidden me to reach : since it is not permitted me to commend you, according to the extent of my wishes, and much less is it in my power to make my commendations equal to your merits.

Yet in this frugality of your praises, there are some things which I cannot omit, without detracting from your character. You have so formed your own education, as enables you to pay the debt you owe your country, or, more properly speaking, both your countries ; because you were born, I may almost say, in purple, at the Castle of Dublin, when your grandfather was Lord-Lieutenant, and have since been bred in the Court of England.

If this address had been in verse, I might have called you, as Claudian calls Mercury, *Numen commune, gemino faciens commercia mundo*. The better to satisfy this double obligation, you have early cultivated the genius you have to arms, that when the service of Britain or Ireland shall require your courage and your conduct, you may exert them both to the benefit of either country. You began in the cabinet what you afterwards practised in the camp ; and thus both Lucullus and Cæsar (to omit a crowd of shining Romans) formed themselves to war by the study of history, and by the examples of the greatest captains, both of Greece and Italy, before their time. I name those two commanders in particular, because they were better read in chronicle than any of the Roman leaders ; and that Lucullus in particular, having only the theory of war from books, was thought fit, without practice, to be sent into the field against the most formidable enemy of Rome. Tully indeed was called the learned Consul in derision ; but then he was not born a soldier ; his head was turned another way : when he read the Tactics, he was thinking on the bar, which was his field of battle. The knowledge of warfare is thrown away on a general, who dares not make use of what he knows. I commend it only in a man of courage and resolution : in him it will direct his martial spirit, and teach him the way to the best victories, which are those that are least bloody, and which, though achieved by the hand, are managed by the head. Science distinguishes a man of honour from one of those athletic brutes whom undeservedly we call heroes. Cursed be the poet, who first honoured with that name a mere Ajax, a man-killing idiot. The Ulysses of Ovid upbraids his ignorance, that he understood not the shield for which he pleaded ; there was engraven on it plans of cities, and maps of countries, which Ajax could not comprehend, but looked on them as stupidly as his fellow-beast, the lion. But on the other side, your Grace has given yourself the education of his rival : you have studied every spot of ground in Flanders, which for these ten years past has been the scene of battles and of sieges. No wonder if you performed your part with such applause on a theatre which you understood so well.

If I designed this for a poetical encomium, it were easy to enlarge on so copious a subject ; but confining myself to the severity of truth, and to what is becoming me to say, I must not only pass over many instances of your military skill, but also those of your assiduous diligence in the war ; and of your personal bravery, attended with an ardent thirst of honour ; a long train of generosity ; profuseness of doing good ; a soul unsatisfied with all it has done ; and an unextinguished desire of doing more. But all this is matter for your own historians ; I am, as Virgil says,

“ *Spatis exclusus iniquis.* ”

Yet not to be wholly silent of all your charities, I must stay a little on one action, which preferred the relief of others to the consideration of yourself. When, in the battle of Landen, your heat of courage (a fault only pardonable to your youth) had transported

you so far before your friends, that they were unable to follow, much less to succour you ; when you were not only dangerously, but, in all appearance, mortally wounded ; when in that desperate condition you were made prisoner, and carried to Namur, at that time in possession of the French ; then it was, my lord, that you took a considerable part of what was remitted to you of your own revenues, and, as a memorable instance of your heroic charity, put it into the hands of Count Guiscard, who was Governor of the place, to be distributed among your fellow-prisoners. The French commander, charmed with the greatness of your soul, accordingly consigned it to the use for which it was intended by the donor ; by which means the lives of so many miserable men were saved, and a comfortable provision made for their subsistence, who had otherwise perished, had not you been the companion of their misfortune ; or rather sent by Providence, like another Joseph, to keep out famine from invading those, whom in humility you called your brethren. How happy was it for those poor creatures, that your Grace was made their fellow-sufferer ! And how glorious for you, that you chose to want, rather than not relieve the wants of others ! The heathen poet, in commending the charity of Dido to the Trojans, spoke like a Christian :—

“ Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.”

All men, even those of a different interest, and contrary principles, must praise this action, as the most eminent for piety, not only in this degenerate age, but almost in any of the former ; when men were made *de meliore luto* ; when examples of charity were frequent, and when there were in being

“ Teucri pulcherrima proles,
Magnanimi heroes nati melioribus annis.”

No envy can detract from this : it will shine in history ; and, like swans, grow whiter the longer it endures ; and the name of ORMOND will be more celebrated in his captivity, than in his greatest triumphs.

But all actions of your Grace are of a piece ; as waters keep the tenor of their fountains : your compassion is general, and has the same effect as well on enemies as friends. It is so much in your nature to do good, that your life is but one continued act of placing benefits on many, as the sun is always carrying his light to some part or other of the world. And were it not that your reason guides you where to give, I might almost say that you could not help bestowing more than is consisting with the fortune of a private man, or with the will of any but an Alexander.

What wonder is it then, that being born for a blessing to mankind, your supposed death in that engagement was so generally lamented through the nation ? The concernment for it was as universal as the loss ; and though the gratitude might be counterfeit in some, yet the tears of all were real : where every man deplored his private part in that calamity, and even those who had not tasted of your favours, yet built so much on the fame of your beneficence, that they bemoaned the loss of their expectations.

This brought the untimely death of your great father into fresh remembrance ; as if the same decree had passed on two short successive generations of the virtuous ; and I repeated to myself the same verses, which I had formerly applied to him :—

“ Ostendunt teris hunc tantum fata, nec ultra
Esse sinunt.”

But to the joy not only of all good men, but of mankind in general, the unhappy omen took not place. You are still living to enjoy the blessings and applause of all the good you have performed, the prayers of multitudes whom you have obliged for your long prosperity ; and that your power of doing generous and charitable actions may be as extended as your will ; which is by none more zealously desired than by—Your Grace's most humble, most obliged, and most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

PREFACE.

It is with a poet, as with a man who designs to build, and is very exact, as he supposes, in casting up the cost beforehand ; but, generally speaking, he is mistaken in his account, and reckons short in the expense he first intended. He alters his mind as the work proceeds, and will have this or that convenience more, of which he had not thought when he began. So has it happened to me : I have built a house, where I intended but a lodge ; yet with better success than a certain nobleman, who, beginning with a dog-kennel, never lived to finish the palace he had contrived.

From translating the first of Homer's *Iliads* (which I intended as an essay to the whole work), I proceeded to the translation of the twelfth book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, because it contains, among other things, the causes, the beginning, and ending, of the Trojan war. Here I ought in reason to have stopped ; but the speeches of Ajax and Ulysses lying next in my way, I could not baulk them. When I had compassed them, I was so taken with the former part of the fifteenth book (which is the master-piece of the whole *Metamorphoses*), that I enjoined myself the pleasing task of rendering it into English. And now I found, by the number of my verses, that they began to swell into a little volume ; which gave me an occasion of looking backward on some beauties of my author, in his former books : there occurred to me "The Hunting of the Boar," "Cinyras and Myrrha," the good-natured story of "Baucis and Philemon," with the rest, which I hope I have translated closely enough, and given them the same turn of verse which they had in the original ; and this, I may say without vanity, is not the talent of every poet. He who has arrived the nearest to it, is the ingenious and learned Sandys ; the best versifier of the former age ; if I may properly call it by that name which was the former part of this concluding century. For Spenser and Fairfax both flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth ; great masters in our language, and who saw much farther into the beauties of our numbers than those who immediately followed them. Milton was the poetical son of Spenser, and Mr. Waller of Fairfax, for we have our lineal descents and clans, as well as other families. Spenser more than once insinuates, that the soul of Chaucer was transfused into his body, and that he was begotten by him two hundred years after his decease. Milton has acknowledged to me, that Spenser was his original, and many besides myself have heard our famous Waller own, that he derived the harmony of his numbers from the Godfrey of Bulloigne, which was turned into English by Mr. Fairfax.

But to return. Having done with Ovid for this time, it came into my mind, that our

old English poet, Chaucer, in many things resembled him, and that with no disadvantage on the side of the modern author, as I shall endeavour to prove when I compare them ; and as I am, and always have been, studious to promote the honour of my native country, so I soon resolved to put their merits to the trial, by turning some of the " *Canterbury Tales* " into our language, as it is now refined ; for by this means, both the poets being set in the same light, and dressed in the same English habit, story to be compared with story, a certain judgment may be made betwixt them by the reader, without obtruding my opinion on him. Or if I seem partial to my countryman, and predecessor in the laurel, the friends of antiquity are not few ; and besides many of the learned, Ovid has almost all the beaux, and the whole fair sex, his declared patrons. Perhaps I have assumed somewhat more to myself than they allow me, because I have adventured to sum up the evidence ; but the readers are the jury, and their privilege remains entire, to decide according to the merits of the cause, or, if they please, to bring it to another hearing before some other court. In the meantime, to follow the thread of my discourse (as thoughts, according to Mr. Hobbes, have always some connexion), so from Chaucer I was led to think on Boccace, who was not only his contemporary, but also pursued the same studies ; wrote novels in prose, and many works in verse : particularly is said to have invented the octave rhyme, or stanza of eight lines, which ever since has been maintained by the practice of all Italian writers, who are, or at least assume the title of, Heroic Poets : he and Chaucer, among other things, had this in common, that they refined their mother tongues ; but with this difference, that Dante had begun to file their language, at least in verse, before the time of Boccace, who likewise received no little help from his master Petrarch. But the reformation of their prose was wholly owing to Boccace himself, who is yet the standard of purity in the Italian tongue ; though many of his phrases are become obsolete, as in process of time it must needs happen. Chaucer (as you have formerly been told by our learned Mr. Rymer) first adorned and amplified our barren tongue from the Provençal, which was then the most polished of all the modern languages ; but this subject has been copiously treated by that great critic, who deserves no little commendation from us his countrymen. For these reasons of time, and resemblance of genius in Chaucer and Boccace, I resolved to join them in my present work ; to which I have added some original papers of my own ; which, whether they are equal or inferior to my other poems, an author is the most improper judge, and therefore I leave them wholly to the mercy of the reader. I will hope the best, that they will not be condemned ; but if they should, I have the excuse of an old gentleman, who mounting on horseback before some ladies, when I was present, got up somewhat heavily, but desired of the fair spectators, that they would count fourscore and eight before they judged him. By the mercy of God, I am already come within twenty years of his number, a cripple in my limbs ; but what decays are in my mind, the reader must determine. I think myself as vigorous as ever in the faculties of my soul, excepting only my memory, which is not impaired to any great degree ; and if I lose not more of it, I have no great reason to complain. What judgment I had, increases rather than diminishes ; and thoughts, such as they are, come crowding in so fast upon me, that my only difficulty is to choose or to reject ; to run them into verse, or to give them the other harmony of prose. I have so long studied and practised both, that they are grown into a habit, and become familiar to me. In short, though I may lawfully plead some part of the old gentleman's excuse, yet I will reserve it till I think I have greater need, and ask no grains of allowance for the faults of this my present work, but those which are given of course to human frailty. I will

not trouble my reader with the shortness of time in which I writ it, or the several intervals of sickness : they who think too well of their own performances, are apt to boast in their prefaces how little time their works have cost them, and what other business of more importance interfered : but the reader will be as apt to ask the question, why they allowed not a longer time to make their works more perfect ? and why they had so despicable an opinion of their judges, as to thrust their indigested stuff upon them, as if they deserved no better ?

With this account of my present undertaking, I conclude the first part of this discourse : in the second part, as at a second sitting, though I alter not the draught, I must touch the same features over again, and change the dead colouring of the whole. In general I will only say, that I have written nothing which savours of immorality or profaneness ; at least, I am not conscious to myself of any such intention. If there happen to be found an irreverent expression, or a thought too wanton, they are crept into my verses through my inadvertency ; if the searchers find any in the cargo, let them be staved or forfeited, like contrabanded goods ; at least, let their authors be answerable for them, as being but imported merchandise, and not of my own manufacture. On the other side, I have endeavoured to choose such fables, both ancient and modern, as contain in each of them some instructive moral, which I could prove by induction, but the way is tedious ; and they leap foremost into sight, without the reader's trouble of looking after them. I wish I could affirm, with a safe conscience, that I had taken the same care in all my former writings ; for it must be owned, that supposing verses are never so beautiful or pleasing, yet if they contain anything which shocks religion, or good manners, they are at best what Horace says of good numbers without good sense,

“ Versus inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ.”

Thus far, I hope, I am right in court, without renouncing my other right of self-defence, where I have been wrongfully accused, and my sense wire-drawn into blasphemy or bawdry, as it has often been by a religious lawyer, in a late pleading against the stage ; in which he mixes truth with falsehood, and has not forgotten the old rule of calumniating strongly, that something may remain.

I resume the thread of my discourse with the first of my translation, which was the first *Iliad* of Homer. If it shall please God to give me longer life, and moderate health, my intentions are to translate the whole *Ilias* ; provided still that I meet with those encouragements from the public, which may enable me to proceed in my undertaking with some cheerfulness. And this I dare assure the world before-hand, that I have found, by trial, Homer a more pleasing task than Virgil (though I say not the translation will be less laborious). For the Grecian is more according to my genius, than the Latin poet. In the works of the two authors we may read their manners, and natural inclinations, which are wholly different. Virgil was of a quiet, sedate temper ; Homer was violent, impetuous, and full of fire. The chief talent of Virgil was propriety of thoughts, and ornament of words ; Homer was rapid in his thoughts, and took all the liberties both of numbers, and of expressions, which his language, and the age in which he lived, allowed him : Homer's invention was more copious, Virgil's more confined ; so that if Homer had not led the way, it was not in Virgil to have begun heroic poetry ; for nothing can be more evident, than that the Roman poem is but the second part of the *Ilias* : a continuation of the same story, and the persons already

formed; the manners of *Æneas* are those of *Hector* superadded to those which *Homer* gave him. The adventures of *Ulysses* in the *Odysseis* are imitated in the first Six Books of *Virgil's Æneis*; and though the accidents are not the same (which would have argued him of a servile copying, and total barrenness of invention), yet the seas were the same in which both the heroes wandered; and *Dido* cannot be denied to be the poetical daughter of *Calypso*. The six latter books of *Virgil's* poem are the four-and-twenty *Iliads* contracted: a quarrel occasioned by a lady, a single combat, battles fought, and a town besieged. I say not this in derogation to *Virgil*, neither do I contradict anything which I have formally said in his just praise: for his Episodes are almost wholly of his own invention; and the form, which he has given to the telling, makes the tale his own, even though the original story had been the same. But this proves, however, that *Homer* taught *Virgil* to design; and if invention be the first virtue of an Epic poet, then the Latin poem can only be allowed the second place. Mr. *Hobbes*, in the preface to his own bald translation of the *Ilias* (studying poetry as he did mathematics, when it was too late), Mr. *Hobbes*, I say, begins the praise of *Homer* where he should have ended it. He tells us, that the first beauty of an Epic poem consists in diction, that is, in the choice of words, and harmony of numbers: now the words are the colouring of the work, which in the order of nature is last to be considered. The design, the disposition, the manners, and the thoughts, are all before it: where any of those are wanting or imperfect, so much wants or is imperfect in the imitation of human life; which is in the very definition of a poem. Words indeed, like glaring colours, are the first beauties that arise, and strike the sight: but if the draught be false or lame, the figures ill-disposed, the manners obscure or inconsistent, or the thoughts unnatural, then the finest colours are but daubing, and the piece is a beautiful monster at the best. Neither *Virgil* nor *Homer* were deficient in any of the former beauties; but in this last, which is expression, the Roman poet is at least equal to the Grecian, as I have said elsewhere; supplying the poverty of his language by his musical ear, and by his diligence. But to return: our two great poets, being so different in their tempers, one choleric and sanguine, the other phlegmatic and melancholic; that which makes them excel in their several ways, is, that each of them has followed his own natural inclination, as well in forming the design, as in the execution of it. The very heroes show their authors: *Achilles* is hot, impatient, revengeful, *Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer*, &c.; *Æneas* patient, considerate, careful of his people, and merciful to his enemies; ever submissive to the will of heaven, *quo fata trahunt, retrahuntque sequamur*. I could please myself with enlarging on this subject, but am forced to defer it to a fitter time. From all I have said I will only draw this inference, that the action of *Homer* being more full of vigour than that of *Virgil*, according to the temper of the writer, is of consequence more pleasing to the reader. One warms you by degrees; the other sets you on fire all at once, and never intermits his heat. 'Tis the same difference which *Longinus* makes betwixt the effects of eloquence in *Demosthenes* and *Tully*. One persuades; the other commands. You never cool while you read *Homer*, even not in the second book (a graceful flattery to his countrymen); but he hastens from the ships, and concludes not that book till he has made you an amends by the violent playing of a new machine. From thence he hurries on his action with variety of events, and ends it in less compass than two months. This vehemence of his, I confess, is more suitable to my temper; and therefore I have translated his first book with greater pleasure than any part of *Virgil*; but it was not a pleasure without pains: the continual agitations of the spirits must needs be a weakening of any constitution, especially in age; and many

pauses are required for refreshment betwixt the heats; the *Iliad* of itself being a third part longer than all Virgil's works together.

This is what I thought needful in this place to say of Homer. I proceed to Ovid and Chaucer, considering the former only in relation to the latter. With Ovid ended the golden age of the Roman tongue; from Chaucer the purity of the English tongue began. The manners of the poets were not unlike: both of them were well-bred, well-natured, amorous, and libertine, at least in their writings, it may be also in their lives. Their studies were the same, philosophy and philology. Both of them were known in astronomy, of which Ovid's books of the Roman feasts, and Chaucer's treatise of the *Astrolabe*, are sufficient witnesses. But Chaucer was likewise an astrologer, as were Virgil, Horace, Persius, and Manilius. Both writ with wonderful facility and clearness: neither were great inventors; for Ovid only copied the Grecian fables; and most of Chaucer's stories were taken from his Italian contemporaries, or their predecessors. Boccace's "*Decameron*" was first published; and from thence our Englishman has borrowed many of his "*Canterbury Tales*;" yet that of "*Palamon and Arcite*" was written in all probability by some Italian wit in a former age, as I shall prove hereafter: the tale of Grizild was the invention of Petrarch; by him sent to Boccace; from whom it came to Chaucer: "*Troilus and Cressida*" was also written by a Lombard author; but much amplified by our English translator, as well as beautified: the genius of our countrymen in general being rather to improve an invention, than to invent themselves; as is evident not only in our poetry, but in many of our manufactures. I find I have anticipated already, and taken up from Boccace before I come to him; but there is so much less behind; and I am of the temper of most kings, who love to be in debt, are all for present money, no matter how they pay it afterwards: besides, the nature of a preface is rambling; never wholly out of the way, nor in it. This I have learned from the practice of honest Montaigne, and return at my pleasure to Ovid and Chaucer, of whom I have little more to say. Both of them built on the inventions of other men; yet since Chaucer had something of his own, as "*The Wife of Bath's Tale*," "*The Cock and the Fox*," which I have translated, and some others, I may justly give our countryman the precedence in that part; since I can remember nothing of Ovid which was wholly his. Both of them understood the manners, under which name I comprehend the passions, and, in a larger sense, the descriptions of persons, and their very habits; for an example, I see *Baucis and Philemon* as perfectly before me, as if some ancient painter had drawn them; and all the pilgrims in the "*Canterbury Tales*," their humours, their features, and the very dress, as distinctly as if I had supped with them at the *Tabard* in Southwark; yet even there too the figures in Chaucer are much more lively, and set in a better light: which though I have not time to prove, yet I appeal to the reader, and am sure he will clear me from partiality. The thoughts and words remain to be considered in the comparison of the two poets; and I have saved myself one half of that labour, by owning that Ovid lived when the Roman tongue was in its meridian, Chaucer in the dawning of our language; therefore that part of the comparison stands not on an equal foot, any more than the diction of Ennius and Ovid, or of Chaucer and our present English. The words are given up as a post not to be defended in our poet, because he wanted the modern art of fortifying. The thoughts remain to be considered, and they are to be measured only by their propriety; that is, as they flow more or less naturally from the persons described, on such and such occasions. The vulgar judges, which are nine parts in ten of all nations, who call conceits and jingles wit, who see Ovid full of them, and Chaucer altogether without them, will think me little less than mad, for preferring the Englishman to the Roman: yet,

with their leave, I must presume to say, that the things they admire are only glittering trifles, and so far from being witty, that in a serious poem they are nauseous, because they are unnatural. Would any man, who is ready to die for love, describe his passion like Narcissus? Would he think of *inopem me copia fecit*, and a dozen more of such expressions, poured on the neck of one another, and signifying all the same thing? If this were wit, was this a time to be witty, when the poor wretch was in the agony of death? This is just John Littlewit in Bartholomew Fair, who had a conceit (as he tells you) left him in his misery; a miserable conceit. On these occasions the poet should endeavour to raise pity; but, instead of this, Ovid is tickling you to laugh. Virgil never made use of such machines, when he was moving you to commiserate the death of Dido: he would not destroy what he was building. Chaucer makes Arcite violent in his love, and unjust in the pursuit of it: yet when he came to die, he made him think more reasonably: he repents not of his love, for that had altered his character; but acknowledges the injustice of his proceedings, and resigns Emilia to Palamon. What would Ovid have done on this occasion? He would certainly have made Arcite witty on his death-bed. He had complained he was farther off from possession by being so near, and a thousand such boyisms, which Chaucer rejected as below the dignity of the subject. They who think otherwise would, by the same reason, prefer Lucan and Ovid to Homer and Virgil, and Martial to all four of them. As for the turn of words, in which Ovid particularly excels all poets; they are sometimes a fault, and sometimes a beauty, as they are used properly or improperly; but in strong passions always to be shunned, because passions are serious, and will admit no playing. The French have a high value for them; and I confess, they are often what they call delicate, when they are introduced with judgment; but Chaucer writ with more simplicity, and followed nature more closely, than to use them. I have thus far, to the best of my knowledge, been an upright judge betwixt the parties in competition, not meddling with the design nor the disposition of it; because the design was not their own, and in the disposing of it they were equal. It remains that I say somewhat of Chaucer in particular.

In the first place, as he is the father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil: he is a perpetual fountain of good sense; learned in all sciences: and therefore speaks properly on all subjects; as he knew what to say, so he knows also when to leave off, a continence which is practised by few writers, and scarcely by any of the ancients, excepting Virgil and Horace. One of our late great poets* is sunk in his reputation, because he could never forgive any conceit which came in his way, but swept like a drag-net, great and small. There was plenty enough, but the dishes were ill-sorted; whole pyramids of sweetmeats for boys and women, but little of solid meat for men: all this proceeded not from any want of knowledge, but of judgment; neither did he want that in discerning the beauties and faults of other poets; but only indulged himself in the luxury of writing; and perhaps knew it was a fault, but hoped the reader would not find it. For this reason, though he must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteemed a good writer: and for ten impressions, which his works have had in so many successive years, yet at present a hundred books are scarcely purchased once a twelvemonth: for, as my last Lord Rochester said, though somewhat profanely, "Not being of God, he could not stand."

Chaucer followed nature everywhere; but was never so bold to go beyond her: and

* Cowley.

there is a great difference of being *Poeta* and *nimis Poeta*, if we believe Catullus, as much as betwixt a modest behaviour and affectation. The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us; but it is like the eloquence of one whom Tacitus commends, it was *auribus istius temporis accommodata*: they who lived with him, and some time after him, thought it musical; and it continues so even in our judgment, if compared with the numbers of Lydgate and Gower, his contemporaries: there is the rude sweetness of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleasing, though not perfect. It is true, I cannot go so far as he who published the last edition of him; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine: but this opinion is not worth confuting; it is so gross and obvious an error, that common sense (which is a rule in everything but matters of faith and revelation) must convince the reader, that equality of numbers in every verse which we call Heroic, was either not known, or not always practised in Chaucer's age. It were an easy matter to produce some thousands of his verses, which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronunciation can make otherwise. We can only say, that he lived in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at the first. We must be children before we grow men. There was an Ennius, and in process of time a Lucilius, and a Lucretius, before Virgil and Horace; even after Chaucer there was a Spenser, a Harrington, a Fairfax, before Waller and Denham were in being: and our numbers were in their nonage till these last appeared. I need say little of his parentage, life, and fortunes: they are to be found at large in all the editions of his works. He was employed abroad and favoured by Edward the Third, Richard the Second, and Henry the Fourth, and was poet, as I suppose, to all three of them. In Richard's time, I doubt, he was a little dipt in the rebellion of the commons; and being brother-in-law to John of Gaunt, it was no wonder if he followed the fortunes of that family; and was well with Henry the Fourth when he had deposed his predecessor. Neither is it to be admired, that Henry, who was a wise as well as a valiant prince, who claimed by succession, and was sensible that his title was not sound, but was rightfully in Mortimer, who had married the heir of York; it was not to be admired, I say, if that great politician should be pleased to have the greatest wit of those times in his interests, and to be the trumpet of his praises. Augustus had given him the example, by the advice of Mæcenas, who recommended Virgil and Horace to him; whose praises helped to make him popular while he was alive, and after his death have made him precious to posterity. As for the religion of our poet, he seems to have some little bias towards the opinions of Wickliff, after John of Gaunt his patron; somewhat of which appears in the tale of "Piers Plowman": yet I cannot blame him for inveighing so sharply against the vices of the clergy in his age: their pride, their ambition, their pomp, their avarice, their worldly interest, deserved the lashes which he gave them, both in that, and in most of his "Canterbury Tales": neither has his contemporary Boccace spared them. Yet both those poets lived in much esteem with good and holy men in orders: for the scandal which is given by particular priests, reflects not on the sacred function. Chaucer's Monk, his Canon, and his Friar, took not from the character of his Good Parson. A satirical poet is the check of the layman on bad priests. We are only to take care, that we involve not the innocent with the guilty in the same condemnation. The good cannot be too much honoured, nor the bad too coarsely used: for the corruption of the best becomes the worst. When a clergyman is whipped, his gown is first taken off, by which the dignity of his order is secured: if he be wrongfully accused he has his action of slander; and it is at the poet's peril, if he trans-

gress the law. But they will tell us that all kind of satire, though never so well deserved by particular priests, yet brings the whole order into contempt. Is then the peerage of England any thing dishonoured, when a peer suffers for his treason? If he be libelled, or any way defamed, he has his *Scandalum Magnatum* to punish the offender. They who use this kind of argument seem to be conscious to themselves of somewhat which has deserved the poet's lash; and are less concerned for their public capacity, than for their private; at least there is pride at the bottom of their reasoning. If the faults of men in orders are only to be judged among themselves, they are all in some sort parties: for, since they say the honour of their order is concerned in every member of it, how can we be sure, that they will be impartial judges? How far I may be allowed to speak my opinion in this case, I know not: but I am sure a dispute of this nature caused mischief in abundance betwixt a king of England and an archbishop of Canterbury; one standing up for the laws of his land, and the other for the honour (as he called it) of God's Church; which ended in the murder of the prelate, and in the whipping of his majesty from post to pillar for his penance. The learned and ingenious Dr. Drake has saved me the labour of inquiring into the esteem and reverence which the priests have had of old; and I would rather extend than diminish any part of it: yet I must needs say, that when a priest provokes me without any occasion given him, I have no reason, unless it be the charity of a Christian, to forgive him. *Prior lastis* is justification sufficient in the Civil Law. If I answer him in his own language, self-defence, I am sure, must be allowed me; and if I carry it farther, even to a sharp re- crimination, somewhat may be indulged to human frailty. Yet my resentment has not wrought so far, but that I have followed Chaucer in his character of a holy man, and have enlarged on that subject with some pleasure, reserving to myself the right, if I shall think fit hereafter, to describe another sort of priests, such as are more easily to be found than the good parson; such as have given the last blow to Christianity in this age, by a practice so contrary to their doctrine. But this will keep cold till another time. In the meanwhile, I take up Chaucer where I left him. He must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his "Canterbury Tales" the various manners and humours (as we now call them) of the whole English nation, in his age. Not a single character has escaped him. All his pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations, but in their very physiognomies and persons. Baptista Porta could not have described their natures better, than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humours, and callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity: their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding; such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some virtuous; some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different: the Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook, are several men, and distinguished from each other, as much as the mincing lady prioress, and the broad-speaking gap-toothed wife of Bath. But enough of this: there is such a variety of game springing up before me, that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty. We have our forefathers and great-grandames all before us, as they were in Chaucer's days; their general characters are still remaining in mankind, and even in England, though they are called by other

names than those of Monks and Friars, and Canons, and lady Abbesses, and Nuns : for mankind is ever the same, and nothing lost out of nature, though every thing is altered. May I have leave to do myself the justice (since my enemies will do me none, and are so far from granting me to be a good poet, that they will not allow me so much as to be a Christian, or a moral man), may I have leave, I say, to inform my reader, that I have confined my choice to such tales of Chaucer as savour nothing of immodesty. If I had desired more to please than to instruct, the Reeve, the Miller, the Shipman, the Merchant, the Sumner, and, above all, the Wife of Bath, in the prologue to her tale, would have procured me as many friends and readers as there are beaux and ladies of pleasure in the town. But I will no more offend against good manners : I am sensible, as I ought to be, of the scandal I have given by my loose writings ; and make what reparation I am able, by this public acknowledgment. If any thing of this nature, or of profaneness, be crept into these poems, I am so far from defending it, that I disown it. *Totum hoc indictum volo.* Chaucer makes another manner of apology for his broad speaking, and Boccace makes the like ; but I will follow neither of them. Our countryman, in the end of his characters, before the "Canterbury Tales," thus excuses the ribaldry which is very gross in many of his novels :—

"But first, I pray you of your courtesay,
That ye ne arrette it nought my villany,
Though that I plainly speak in this mattere
To tellen you her words, and eke her chere :
Ne though I speak her words properly,
For this ye knowen as well as I,
Who shall tellen a tale after a man,
He mote rehearse as nye, as ever he can :
Everich word of it been in his charge,
All speke he, never so rudely, ne large.
Or else he mote tellen his tale untrue,
Or feine things, or find words new :
He may not spare, although he were his brother,
He mote as well say o word as another.
Christ spake himself full broad in holy writ,
And well I wote no villany is it,
Eke Plato saith, who so can him rede,
The words mote been cousin to the dede."

Yet if a man should have enquired of Boccace or of Chaucer, what need they had of introducing such characters, where obscene words were proper in their mouths, but very indecent to be heard, I know not what answer they could have made : for that reason, such tales shall be left untold by me. You have here a specimen of Chaucer's language, which is so obsolete, that his sense is scarce to be understood ; and you have likewise more than one example of his unequal numbers, which were mentioned before. Yet many of his verses consist of ten syllables, and the words not much behind our present English ; as, for example, these two lines, in the description of the carpenter's young wife :—

"Wincing she was, as is a jolly colt,
Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt."

I have almost done with Chaucer, when I have answered some objections relating to

my present work. I find some people are offended that I have turned these tales into modern English; because they think them unworthy of my pains, and look on Chaucer as a dry, old-fashioned wit, not worth reviving. I have often heard the late Earl of Leicester say, that Mr. Cowley himself was of that opinion; who having read him over at my lord's request, declared he had no taste of him. I dare not advance my opinion against the judgment of so great an author; but I think it fair, however, to leave the decision to the public: Mr. Cowley was too modest to set up for a dictator: and being shocked perhaps with his old style, never examined into the depth of his good sense. Chaucer, I confess, is a rough diamond, and must first be polished, ere he shines. I deny not, likewise, that, living in our early days of poetry, he writes not always of a piece; but sometimes mingles trivial things with those of greater moment. Sometimes also, though not often, he runs riot, like Ovid, and knows not when he has said enough. But there are more great wits besides Chaucer, whose fault is their excess of conceits, and those ill sorted. An author is not to write all he can, but only all he ought. Having observed this redundancy in Chaucer (as it is an easy matter for a man of ordinary parts to find a fault in one of greater), I have not tied myself to a literal translation; but have often omitted what I judged unnecessary, or not of dignity enough to appear in the company of better thoughts. I have presumed farther, in some places, and added somewhat of my own where I thought my author was deficient, and had not given his thoughts their true lustre, for want of words in the beginning of our language. And to this I was the more emboldened, because (if I may be permitted to say it of myself) I found I had a soul congenial to his, and that I had been conversant in the same studies. Another poet, in another age, may take the same liberty with my writings; if at least they live long enough to deserve correction. It was also necessary sometimes to restore the sense of Chaucer, which was lost or mangled in the errors of the press: let this example suffice at present; in the story of "Palamon and Arcite," here the temple of Diana is described, you find these verses, in all the editions of our author:—

"There saw I Danè turned into a tree,
I mean not the goddess Diane,
But Venus daughter, which that hight Danè:"

which, after a little consideration, I knew was to be reformed into this sense, that Daphne, the daughter of Peneus, was turned into a tree. I durst not make thus bold with Ovid, lest some future Milbourn should arise, and say I varied from my author because I understood him not.

But there are other judges who think I ought not to have translated Chaucer into English, out of a quite contrary notion: they suppose there is a certain veneration due to his old language; and that it is a little less than profanation and sacrilege to alter it. They are farther of opinion, that somewhat of his good sense will suffer in this transfusion, and much of the beauty of his thoughts will infallibly be lost, which appear with more grace in their old habit. Of this opinion was that excellent person, whom I mentioned, the late Earl of Leicester, who valued Chaucer as much as Mr. Cowley despised him. My lord dissuaded me from this attempt (for I was thinking of it some years before his death), and his authority prevailed so far with me, as to defer my undertaking while he lived, in deference to him: yet my reason was not convinced with what he urged against it. If the first

end of a writer be to be understood, then as his language grows obsolete, his thoughts must grow obscure :

"Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentque,
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi."

When an ancient word for its sound and significancy deserves to be revived, I have that reasonable veneration for antiquity, to restore it. All beyond this is superstition. Words are not like landmarks, so sacred as never to be removed ; customs are changed, and even statutes are silently repealed, when the reason ceases for which they were enacted. As for the other part of the argument, that his thoughts will lose of their original beauty, by the innovation of words : in the first place, not only their beauty, but their being is lost, where they are no longer understood, which is the present case. I grant that something must be lost in all transfusion, that is, in all translations ; but the sense will remain, which would otherwise be lost, or at least be maimed, when it is scarce intelligible ; and that but to a few. How few are there who can read Chaucer, so as to understand him perfectly ? And if imperfectly, then with less profit and no pleasure. 'Tis not for the use of some old Saxon friends, that I have taken these pains with him : let them neglect my version, because they have no need of it. I made it for their sakes who understand sense and poetry as well as they, when that poetry and sense is put into words which they understand. I will go farther, and dare to add, that what beauties I lose in some places, I give to others which had them not originally ; but in this I may be partial to myself : let the reader judge, and I submit to his decision. Yet I think I have just occasion to complain of them, who, because they understand Chaucer, would deprive the greater part of their countrymen of the same advantage, and hoard him up, as misers do their grandam gold, only to look on it themselves, and hinder others from making use of it. In sum, I seriously protest, that no man ever had, or can have, a greater veneration for Chaucer, than myself. I have translated some part of his works, only that I might perpetuate his memory, or at least refresh it, amongst my countrymen. If I have altered him anywhere for the better, I must at the same time acknowledge, that I could have done nothing without him : *Facile est inventis addere* is no great commendation : and I am not so vain to think I have deserved a greater. I will conclude what I have to say of him singly, with this one remark : a lady of my acquaintance, who keeps a kind of correspondence with some authors of the fair sex in France, has been informed by them, that Mademoiselle de Scudery, who is as old as Sibyl, and inspired like her, by the same god of poetry, is at this time translating Chaucer into modern French.* From which I gather, that he has been formerly translated into the Provençal (for how she should come to understand old English I know not). But the matter of fact being true, it makes me think that there is something in it like fatality ; that, after certain periods of time, the fame and memory of great wits should be renewed, as Chaucer is both in France and England. If this be wholly chance, 'tis extraordinary, and I dare not call it more, for fear of being taxed with superstition.

Boccace comes last to be considered, who, living in the same age with Chaucer, had the same genius, and followed the same studies : both writ novels, and each of them

* Scott asserts that this is a mistake. Mdlle. Scudery, the French novelist of her day, was at this time ninety-four years old, and had never intended to translate Chaucer.

cultivated his mother tongue. But the greatest resemblance of our two modern authors being in their familiar style, and pleasing way of relating comical adventures, I may pass it over, because I have translated nothing from Boccace of that nature. In the serious part of poetry, the advantage is wholly on Chaucer's side; for though the Englishman has borrowed many tales from the Italian, yet it appears that those of Boccace were not generally of his own making, but taken from authors of former ages, and by him only modelled: so that what there was of invention in either of them, may be judged equal. But Chaucer has refined on Boccace, and has mended the stories which he has borrowed, in his way of telling; though prose allows more liberty of thought, and the expression is more easy, when unconfined by numbers. Our countryman carries weight, and yet wins the race at disadvantage. I desire not the reader should take my word: and therefore I will set two of their discourses, ^{one} ^{on the same subject,} in the same light, for every man to judge betwixt them. I translated Chaucer's ^{first} and, amongst the rest, pitched on "The Wife of Bath's Tale;" not daring, as I have said, ^{to} adventure on her prologue, because it is too licentious: there Chaucer introduces an old woman of mean parentage, whom a youthful knight of noble blood was forced to marry, and consequently loathed her: the crone being in bed with him on the wedding-night, and finding his aversion, endeavours to win his affection by reason, and speaks a good word for herself (as who could blame her?), in hope to mollify the sullen bridegroom. She takes her topics from the benefits of poverty, the advantages of old age and ugliness, the vanity of youth, and the silly pride of ancestry and titles without the inherent virtue, which is the true nobility. When I had closed Chaucer, I returned to Ovid, and translated some more of his fables; and by this time had so far forgotten "The Wife of Bath's Tale," that, when I took up Boccace, unawares I fell on the same argument of preferring virtue to nobility of blood, and titles, in the story of Sigismunda; which I had certainly avoided for the resemblance of the two discourses, if my memory had not failed me. Let the reader weigh them both; and if he thinks me partial to Chaucer, it is in him to right Boccace.

I prefer in our countryman, far above all his other stories, the noble poem of "Palamon and Arcite" which is of the Epic kind, and perhaps not much inferior to the Ilias or the Æneis: the story is more pleasing than either of them, the manners as perfect, the diction as poetical, the learning as deep and various; and the disposition full as artful; only it includes a greater length of time, as taking up seven years at least; but Aristotle has left undecided the duration of the action; which yet is easily reduced into the compass of a year, by a narration of what preceded the return of Palamon to Athens. I had thought for the honour of our nation, and more particularly for his, whose laurel, though unworthy, I have worn after him, that this story was of English growth, and Chaucer's own: but I was undeceived by Boccace; for casually looking on the end of his seventh Giornata, I found Dioneo (under which name he shadows himself), and Fiametta (who represents his mistress, the natural daughter of Robert, king of Naples), of whom these words are spoken, *Dioneo e la Fiametta gran pessa contarono insieme d'Arcita, e di Palamone*: by which it appears that this story was written before the time of Boccace; but the name of its author being wholly lost, Chaucer is now become an original; and I question not but the poem has received many beauties by passing through his noble hands. Besides this tale, there is another of his own invention, after the manner of the Provençals, called "The Flower and the Leaf;" with which I was so particularly pleased, both for the invention and the moral, that I cannot hinder myself from recommending it to the reader.

As a corollary to this preface, in which I have done justice to others, I owe somewhat to myself: not that I think it worth my time to enter the lists with one Milbourn, and one Blackmore, but barely to take notice that such men there are who have written scurrilously against me, without any provocation. Milbourn, who is in Orders, pretends amongst the rest this quarrel to me, that I have fallen foul on priesthood: if I have, I am only to ask pardon of good priests, and am afraid his part of the reparation will come to little. Let him be satisfied that he shall not be able to force himself upon me for an adversary. I condemn him too much to enter into competition with him. His own translations of Virgil have answered his criticisms on mine. If (as they say he has declared in print) he prefers the version of Ogilby to mine, the world has made him the same compliment: for it is agreed on all hands, that he writes even below Ogilby: that, you will say, is not easily to be done; but what cannot Milbourn bring about? I am satisfied, however, that while he and I live together, I shall not be thought the worst poet of the age. It looks as if I had desired him underhand to write so ill against me: but upon my honest word I have not bribed him to do me this service, and am wholly guiltless of his pamphlet. 'Tis true, I should be glad if I could persuade him to continue his good offices, and write such another critique on any thing of mine: for I find by experience he has a great stroke with the reader, when he condemns any of my poems, to make the world have a better opinion of them. He has taken some pains with my poetry; but nobody will be persuaded to take the same with his. If I had taken to the church (as he affirms, but which was never in my thoughts) I should have had more sense, if not more grace, than to have turned myself out of my benefice by writing libels on my parishioners. But his account of my manners and my principles are of a piece with his cavils and his poetry: and so I have done with him for ever.

As for the City Bard, or Knight Physician, I hear his quarrel to me is, that I was the author of "Absalom and Achitophel," which he thinks is a little hard on his fanatic patrons in London.

But I will deal the more civilly with his two poems, because nothing ill is to be spoken of the dead; and therefore peace be to the Manes of his Arthurs. I will only say, that it was not for this noble knight that I drew the plan of an Epic poem on king Arthur, in my preface to the translation of Juvenal. The guardian angels of kingdoms were machines too ponderous for him to manage; and therefore he rejected them, as Dares did the whirlbats of Eryx, when they were thrown before him by Entellus. Yet from that preface he plainly took his hint: for he began immediately upon the story; though he had the baseness not to acknowledge his benefactor; but instead of it, to traduce me in a libel.

I shall say the less of Mr. Collier, because in many things he has taxed me justly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine, which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality; and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in the defence of a bad cause, when I have so often drawn it for a good one. Yet it were not difficult to prove that in many places he has perverted my meaning by his glosses; and interpreted my words into blasphemy and bawdry, of which they were not guilty; besides that, he is too much given to horse-play in his raillery; and comes to battle like a dictator from the plough. I will not say, "The zeal of God's house has eaten him up;" but I am sure it has devoured some part of his good manners and civility. It might also

be doubted whether it were altogether zeal, which prompted him to this rough manner of proceeding; perhaps it became not one of his function to rake into the rubbish of ancient and modern plays; a divine might have employed his pains to better purpose, than in the nastiness of Plautus and Aristophanes; whose examples, as they excuse not me, so it might be possibly supposed, that he read them not without some pleasure. They who have written commentaries on those poets, or on Horace, Juvenal, and Martial, have explained some vices, which without their interpretation had been unknown to modern times. Neither has he judged impartially betwixt the former age and us.

There is more bawdry in one play of Fletcher's, called "The Custom of the Country," than in all ours together. Yet this has been often acted on the stage in my remembrance. Are the times so much more reformed now, than they were five and twenty years ago? If they are, I congratulate the amendment of our morals. But I am not to prejudice the cause of my fellow-poets, though I abandon my own defence: they have some of them answered for themselves, and neither they nor I can think Mr. Collier so formidable an enemy, that we should shun him. He has lost ground at the latter end of the day, by pursuing his point too far, like the Prince of Condé at the battle of Senneffe: from immoral plays, to no plays; *ab abusu ad usum, non valet consequentia*. But being a party, I am not to erect myself into a judge. As for the rest of those who have written against me, they are such scoundrels, that they deserve not the least notice to be taken of them. Blackmore and Milbourn are only distinguished from the crowd, by being remembered to their infamy.

"Demetri, teque Tigelli

Discipularum inter jubeo plorare cathedras."

TALES FROM CHAUCER.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF ORMOND,

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM OF

PALAMON AND ARCITE.

MADAM,
THE bard who first adorned our native
tongue,
Tuned to his British lyre this ancient
song :
Which Homer might without a blush re-
hearse,
And leaves a doubtful palm in Virgil's
verse :
He matched their beauties, where they most
excel ;
Of love sung better, and of arms as well.
Vouchsafe, illustrious Ormond, to behold
What power the charms of beauty had of
old ;
Nor wonder if such deeds of arms were
done,
Inspired by two fair eyes, that sparkled
like your own. 10
If Chaucer by the best idea wrought,
And poets can divine each other's thought,
The fairest nymph before his eyes he set ;
And then the fairest was Plantagenet ; *
Who three contending princes made her
prize,
And ruled the rival nations with her eyes :

* Blanche of Lancaster, to whom Chaucer
addressed a poem. She was his especial friend
and patroness.

Who left immortal trophies of her fame,
And to the noblest order gave the name.
Like her, of equal kindred to the throne,
You keep her conquests, and extend your
own : 20
As when the stars, in their ethereal race,
At length have rolled around the liquid
space,
At certain periods they resume their place,
From the same point of heaven their course
advance,
And move in measures of their former
dance ;
Thus, after length of ages, she returns,
Restored in you, and the same place adorns ;
Or you perform her office in the sphere,
Born of her blood, and make a new Platonic
year.
O true Plantagenet, O race divine, 30
(For beauty still is fatal to the line)
Had Chaucer lived that angel-face to view,
Sure he had drawn his Emily from you ;
Or had you lived to judge the doubtful
right,
Your noble Palamon had been the knight ;
And conquering Theseus from his side had
sent
Your generous lord, to guide the Theban
government.

Time shall accomplish that ; and I shall
see

A Palamon in him, in you an Emily.

Already have the fates your path pre-
pared, 40

And sure presage your future sway declared :
When westward, like the sun, you took
your way,

And from benighted Britain bore the day,
Blue Triton gave the signal from the
shore,

The ready Nereids heard, and swam before
To smooth the seas ; a soft Etesian gale
But just inspired, and gently swelled the
sail ;

Portunus * took his turn, whose ample
hand

Heaved up the lightened keel, and sunk the
sand,

And steered the sacred vessel safe to land. 50
The land, if not restrained, had met your
way,

Projected out a neck, and jutt'd to the sea.
Hibernia, prostrate at your feet, adored
In you, the pledge of her expected lord ;
Due to her isle ; a venerable name :
His father and his grandsire known to
fame ;

Awed by that house, accustomed to com-
mand,

The sturdy kerns in due subjection stand ;
Nor bear the reins in any foreign hand.

At your approach, they crowded to the
port ; 60

And scarcely landed, you create a court :
As Ormond's harbinger, to you they run ;
For Venus is the promise of the sun.

The waste of civil wars, their towns
destroyed,

Pales unhonoured, Ceres unemployed,
Were all forgot ; and one triumphant day
Wiped all the tears of three campaigns
away.

Blood, rapines, massacres, were cheaply
bought,

So mighty recompense your beauty brought.

As when the dove returning bore the
mark 70

Of earth restored to the long-labouring ark,
The relics of mankind, secure of rest,
Oped every window to receive the guest,
And the fair bearer of the message blessed ;
So, when you came, with loud repeated
cries,

The nation took an omen from your eyes,
And God advanced His rainbow in the
skies,

To sign inviolable peace restored ;
The Saints, with solemn shouts, proclaimed
the new accord.

When at your second coming you ap-
pear, 80

(For I foretell that millenary year)

The sharpened share shall vex the soil no
more,

But earth unbidden shall produce her
store :

The land shall laugh, the circling ocean
smile,

And Heaven's indulgence bless the holy
isle.

Heaven from all ages has reserved for you
That happy clime, which venom † never
knew ;

Or if it had been there, your eyes alone
Have power to chase all poison but their
own.

Now in this interval, which fate has
cast 90

Betwixt your future glories and your past,
This pause of power, 'tis Ireland's hour to
mourn ;

While England celebrates your safe return,
By which you seem the seasons to com-
mand,

And bring our summers back to their for-
saken land.

The vanquished isle our leisure must
attend,

Till the fair blessing we vouchsafe to send ;
Nor can we spare you long, tho' often we
may lend.

* The sea god of harbours.

† There are no snakes in Ireland.

The dove was twice employed abroad, before
The world was dried, and she returned no
more. 100

Nor dare we trust so soft a messenger
New from her sickness, to that northern air ;
Rest here a while your lustre to restore,
That they may see you, as you shone before ;
For yet, the eclipse not wholly past, you wade
Through some remains, and dimness of a
shade.

A subject in his prince may claim a right,
Nor suffer him with strength impaired to
fight ;

Till force returns, his ardour we restrain,
And curb his warlike wish to cross the
main. 110

Now past the danger, let the learned begin
The inquiry, where disease could enter in ;
How those malignant atoms forced their
way,
What in the faultless frame they found to
make their prey ?

Where every element was weighed so well,
That Heaven alone, who mixed the mass,
could tell

Which of the four ingredients could rebel :
And where, imprisoned in so sweet a cage,
A soul might well be pleased to pass an age.

And yet the fine materials made it
weak ; 120

Porcelain, by being pure, is apt to break :
Even to your breast the sickness durst
aspire ;

And, forced from that fair temple to retire,
Profanely set the holy place on fire.

In vain your lord, like young Vespasian,
mourned,

When the fierce flames the sanctuary
burned :

And I prepared to pay in verses rude
A most detested act of gratitude :
Even this had been your elegy, which now
Is offered for your health, the table of my
vow. 130

Your angel sure our Morley's mind in-
spired,

To find the remedy your ill required ;

As once the Macedon, by Jove's decree,
Was taught to dream an herb for Ptolemy ;
Or Heaven, which had such over-cost be-
stowed,

As scarce it could afford to flesh and blood,
So liked the frame, he would not work anew,
To save the charges of another you.

Or by his middle science did he steer, 140
And saw some great contingent good appear,
Well worth a miracle to keep you here :

And for that end, preserved the precious
mould,

Which all the future Ormonds was to hold
And meditated in his better mind

An heir from you, who may redeem the
failing kind.

Blest be the power which has at once re-
stored

The hopes of lost succession to your lord ;
Joy to the first and last of each degree,

Virtue to courts, and, what I longed to see,
To you the Graces, and the Muse to me. 150

O daughter of the Rose, whose cheeks unite
The differing titles of the Red and White ;
Who heaven's alternate beauty will display,
The blush of morning, and the milky way ;
Whose face is paradise, but fenced from sin ;
For God in either eye has placed a
cherubin,

All is your lord's alone ; even absent, he
Employs the care of chaste Penelope.

For him you waste in tears your widowed
hours,

For him your curious needle paints the
flowers ; 160

Such works of old imperial dames were
taught ;

Such, for Ascanius, fair Elisa wrought.
The soft recesses of your hours improve

The three fair pledges of your happy love :
All other parts of pious duty done,

You owe your Ormond nothing but a son ;
To fill in future times his father's place,

And wear the garter * of his mother's race.

* The Duchess of Ormond was descended from
that Lady Salisbury in whose honour the Order
of the Garter was instituted.

PALAMON AND ARCITE;*

OR, THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

BOOK I.

IN days of old, there lived, of mighty fame,
A valiant prince, and Theseus was his
name :

A chief who more in feats of arms excelled,
The rising nor the setting sun beheld.

Of Athens he was lord ; much land he won,
And added foreign countries to his crown.

In Scythia with the warrior queen he
strove,

Whom first by force he conquered, then by
love ;

He brought in triumph back the beauteous
dame,

With whom her sister, fair Emilia,
came. 10

With honour to his home let Theseus ride,
With Love to friend, and Fortune for his
guide,

And his victorious army at his side.

I pass their warlike pomp, their proud
array,

Their shouts, their songs, their welcome on
the way :

But, were it not too long, I would recite
The feats of Amazons, the fatal fight
Betwixt the hardy queen and hero knight ;
The town besieged, and how much blood it
cost

The female army, and the Athenian
host ; 20

* Chaucer was more than sixty years old, and
Dryden seventy, when they wrote "Palamon and
Arcite."

The spousals of Hippolita the queen ;

What tilts and tourneys at the feast were
seen ;

The storm at their return, the ladies' fear :
But these, and other things, I must forbear.

The field is spacious I design to sow,
With oxen far unfit to draw the plough

The remnant of my tale is of a length
To tire your patience, and to waste my
strength ;

And trivial accidents shall be forborne,

That others may have time to take their
turn ; 30

As was at first enjoined us by mine host :

That he whose tale is best, and pleases
most,

Should win his supper at our common cost.

And therefore where I left, I will pursue

This ancient story, whether false or true,

In hope it may be mended with a new.

The prince I mentioned, full of high re-
nown,

In this array drew near the Athenian town,
When in his pomp and utmost of his pride

Marching, he chanced to cast his eye
aside, 40

And saw a quire of mourning dames, who
lay

By two and two across the common way :

At his approach they raised a rueful cry,

And beat their breasts, and held their
hands on high,

Creeping and crying, till they seized a
last

His courser's bridle, and his feet embraced

"Tell me," said Theseus, "what and whence you are,
 And why this funeral pageant you prepare?
 Is this the welcome of my worthy deeds, so
 To meet my triumph in ill-omened weeds?
 Or envy you my praise, and would destroy
 With grief my pleasures, and pollute my
 joy?
 Or are you injured, and demand relief?
 Name your request, and I will ease your
 grief."

The most in years of all the mourning
 train

Began (but swooned first away for pain);
 Then scarce recovered spoke. "Nor envy
 we

Thy great renown, nor grudge thy victory;
 Tis thine, O king, the afflicted to redress,
 And fame has filled the world with thy
 success: 60

We wretched women sue for that alone,
 Which of thy goodness is refused to none;
 Let fall some drops of pity on our grief,
 If what we beg be just, and we deserve
 relief:

For none of us, who now thy grace implore,
 But held the rank of sovereign queen be-
 fore;

Till thanks to giddy Chance, which never
 bears

That mortal bliss should last for length of
 years,

She cast us headlong from our high estate,
 And here in hope of thy return we wait: 70
 And long have waited in the temple nigh,
 Built to the gracious goddess Clemency.

But reverence thou the power whose name
 it bears,

Relieve the oppressed, and wipe the
 widow's tears.

I, wretched I, have other fortune seen,
 The wife of Capaneus, and once a queen:
 At Thebes he fell; cursed be the fatal day!
 And all the rest thou seest in this array
 To make their moan, their lords in battle
 lost

Before that town besieged by our con-
 federate host: 80

But Creon, old and impious, who com-
 mands

The Theban city, and usurps the lands,
 Denies the rites of funeral fires to those
 Whose breathless bodies yet he calls his
 foes.

Unburned, unburied, on a heap they lie;
 Such is their fate, and such his tyranny;
 No friend has leave to bear away the
 dead,

But with their lifeless limbs his hounds are
 fed,"

At this she shrieked aloud; the mourn-
 ful train

Echoed her grief, and, grovelling on the
 plain, 90

With groans, and hands upheld, to move
 his mind,

Besought his pity to their helpless kind.

The prince was touched, his tears began
 to flow,

And, as his tender heart would break in
 two,

He sighed; and could not but their fate
 deplore,

So wretched now, so fortunate before.

Then lightly from his lofty steed he flew,
 And raising one by one the suppliant
 crew,

To comfort each, full solemnly he swore,
 That by the faith which knights to knight-
 hood bore, 100

And whate'er else to chivalry belongs,
 He would not cease, till he revenged their
 wrongs:

That Greece should see performed what he
 declared;

And cruel Creon find his just reward.

He said no more, but, shunning all delay,
 Rode on; nor entered Athens on his way:

But left his sister and his queen behind,
 And waved his royal banner in the wind:

Where in an argent field the god of war
 Was drawn triumphant on his iron car; 110

Red was his sword, and shield, and whole
 attire,

And all the godhead seemed to glow with
 fire;

Even the ground glittered where the stand-
ard flew,
And the green grass was dyed to sanguine
hue.

High on his pointed lance his pennon bore
His Cretan fight, the conquered Minotaur :
The soldiers shout around with generous
rage,

And in that victory their own presage.
He praised their ardour ; inly pleased to
see

His host the flower of Grecian chivalry. 120
All day he marched, and all the ensuing
night,

And saw the city with returning light.
The process of the war I need not tell,
How Theseus conquered, and how Creon
fell :

Or after, how by storm the walls were
won,

Or how the victor sacked and burned the
town.

How to the ladies he restored again
The bodies of their lords in battle slain :
And with what ancient rites they were
interred ;

All these to fitter times shall be deferred : 130
I spare the widows' tears, their woful
cries,

And howling at their husbands' obsequies ;
How Theseus at these funerals did assist,
And with what gifts the mourning dames
dismissed.

Thus when the victor chief had Creon
slain,
And conquered Thebes, he pitched upon
the plain

His mighty camp, and, when the day
returned,

The country wasted, and the hamlets
burned,
And left the pillagers, to rapine bred,
Without control to strip and spoil the
dead. 140

There, in a heap of slain, among the
rest

Two youthful knights they found beneath
a load oppressed

Of slaughtered foes, whom first to death
they sent,

The trophies of their strength, a bloody
monument.

Both fair, and both of royal blood they
seemed,

Whom kinsmen to the crown the heralds
deemed ;

That day in equal arms they fought for
fame ;

Their swords, their shields, their surcoats
were the same.

Close by each other laid, they pressed the
ground,

Their manly bosoms pierced with many a
grisly wound ; 150

Nor well alive, nor wholly dead they were,
But some faint signs of feeble life appear :

The wandering breath was on the wing to
part,

Weak was the pulse and hardly heaved
the heart.

These two were sisters' sons ; and Arcite
one,

Much famed in fields, with valiant Palamon.
From these their costly arms the spoilers
rent,

And softly both conveyed to Theseus' tent :
Whom, known of Creon's line, and cured
with care, 160

He to his city sent as prisoners of the war,
Hopeless of ransom, and condemned to lie
In durance, doomed a lingering death to
die.

This done, he marched away with warlike
sound,

And to his Athens turned with laurels
crowned,

Where happy long he lived, much loved,
and more renowned.

But in a tower, and never to be loosed,
The woful captive kinsmen are enclosed :

Thus year by year they pass, and day by
day,

Till once, 'twas on the morn of cheerful
May,

The young Emilia, fairer to be seen 170
Than the fair lily on the flowery green,

More fresh than May herself in blossoms
new

(For with the rosy colour strove her hue),
Waked, as her custom was, before the
day,

To do the observance due to sprightly May :
For sprightly May commands our youth
to keep

The vigils of her night, and breaks their
sluggard sleep ;

Each gentle breast with kindly warmth
she moves ;

Inspires new flames, revives extinguished
loves.

In this remembrance Emily ere day 180
Arose, and dressed herself in rich array ;

Fresh as the month, and as the morning
fair :

Adown her shoulders fell her length of
hair :

A riband did the braided tresses bind,
The rest was loose, and wantoned in the
wind :

Aurora had but newly chased the night,
And purpled o'er the sky with blushing
light,

When to the garden walk she took her
way,

To sport and trip along in cool of day,
And offer maiden vows in honour of the
May. 190

At every turn, she made a little stand,
And thrust among the thorns her lily
hand

To draw the rose, and every rose she drew
She shook the stalk, and brushed away
the dew ;

Then party-coloured flowers of white and
red

She wove, to make a garland for her
head :

This done, she sung and carolled out so
clear,

That men and angels might rejoice to
hear :

Even wondering Philomel forgot to sing ;
And learned from her to welcome in the
spring. 200

The tower, of which before was mention
made,

Within whose keep the captive knights
were laid,

Built of a large extent, and strong withal,
Was one partition of the palace wall ;
The garden was enclosed within the
square,

Where young Emilia took the morning
air.

It happened Palamon, the prisoner
knight,

Restless of woe, arose before the light,
And with his jailor's leave desired to breathe
An air more wholesome than the damps
beneath. 210

This granted, to the tower he took his
way,

Cheered with the promise of a glorious
day :

Then cast a languishing regard around,
And saw, with hateful eyes, the temples
crowned

With golden spires, and all the hostile
ground.

He sighed, and turned his eyes, because
he knew

'Twas but a larger jail he had in view :
Then looked below, and from the castle's
height

Beheld a nearer and more pleasing sight :
The garden, which before he had not
seen 220

In spring's new livery clad of white and
green,

Fresh flowers in wide parterres, and shady
walks between.

This viewed, but not enjoyed, with arms
across

He stood, reflecting on his country's loss ;
Himself an object of the public scorn,
And often wished he never had been born.

At last, for so his destiny required,
With walking giddy, and with thinking
tired,

He through a little window cast his sight,
Though thick of bars, that gave a scanty
light : 230

But even that glimmering served him to
descry

The inevitable charms of Emily.

Scarce had he seen, but seized with
sudden smart,

Stung to the quick, he felt it at his heart ;

Struck blind with overpowering light he
stood,

Then started back amazed, and cried aloud.

Young Arcite heard ; and up he ran with
haste,

To help his friend, and in his arms em-
braced ;

And asked him why he looked so deadly
wan,

And whence and how his change of cheer
began ? 240

Or who had done the offence ? " But if,"
said he,

" Your grief alone is hard captivity :

For love of heaven with patience undergo

A cureless ill, since fate will have it so :

So stood our horoscope in chains to lie,

And Saturn in the dungeon of the sky,

Or other baleful aspect, ruled our birth,

When all the friendly stars were under
earth :

Whate'er betides, by destiny 'tis done ;

And better bear like men, than vainly seek
to shun." 250

" Nor of my bonds," said Palamon again,

" Nor of unhappy planets I complain ;

But when my mortal anguish caused my cry,
That moment I was hurt through either

eye ;

Pierced with a random shaft, I faint away,

And perish with insensible decay :

A glance of some new goddess gave the
wound,

Whom, like Actæon, unaware I found.

Look how she walks along yon shady
space,

Not Juno moves with more majestic
grace ; 260

And all the Cyprian queen is in her face.

If thou art Venus (for thy charms confess

That face was formed in heaven, nor art
thou less ;

Disguised in habit, undisguised in shape),
Oh, help us captives from our chains to
'scape ;

But if our doom be passed in bonds to lie
For life, and in a loathsome dungeon die,
Then be thy wrath appeased with our dis-
grace,

And show compassion to the Theban race,
Oppressed by tyrant power !" While yet
he spoke, 270

Arcite on Emily had fixed his look ;

The fatal dart a ready passage found,

And deep within his heart infix'd the
wound :

So that if Palamon were wounded sore,

Arcite was hurt as much as he, or more :

Then from his inmost soul he sighed,
and said,

" The beauty I behold has struck me
dead :

Unknowingly she strikes ; and kills by
chance ;

Poison is in her eyes, and death in every
glance.

Oh, I must ask ; nor ask alone, but
move 280

Her mind to mercy, or must die for love."

Thus Arcite : and thus Palamon replies,
(Eager his tone, and ardent were his
eyes).

" Speak'st thou in earnest, or in jesting
vein ?"

" Jesting," said Arcite, " suits but ill with
pain."

" It suits far worse" (said Palamon again,
And bent his brows) " with men who
honour weigh,

Their faith to break, their friendship to
betray ;

But worst with thee, of noble lineage born,
My kinsman, and in arms my brother
sworn. 290

Have we not plighted each our holy oath,
That one should be the common good of
both ;

One soul should both inspire, and neither
prove

His fellow's hindrance in pursuit of love ?

To this before the gods we gave our hands,
And nothing but our death can break the
bands.

This binds thee, then, to further my design,
As I am bound by vow to further thine :

Nor canst, nor darest thou, traitor, on the
plain

Approach my honour, or thine own main-
tain, 300

Since thou art of my council, and the friend
Whose faith I trust, and on whose care
depend :

And would'st thou court my lady's love,
which I

Much rather than release would choose
to die?

But thou, false Arcite, never shalt obtain
Thy bad pretence; I told thee first my pain:
For first my love began ere thine was born ;
Thou, as my council, and my brother sworn,
Art bound to assist my eldership of right,
Or justly to be deemed a perjured
knight." 310

Thus Palamon : but Arcite with disdain
In haughty language thus replied again :

" Forsworn thyself: the traitor's odious
name

I first return, and then disprove thy claim.
If love be passion, and that passion nursed
With strong desire, I loved the lady first.
Canst thou pretend desire, whom zeal in-
flamed

To worship, and a power celestial named ?
Thine was devotion to the blest above,
I saw the woman, and desired her love : 320
First owned my passion, and to thee com-
mend

The important secret, as my chosen friend.
Suppose (which yet I grant not) thy desire
A moment elder than my rival fire ;
Can chance of seeing first thy title prove ?
And know'st thou not, no law is made for
love ?

Law is to things which to free choice relate ;
Love is not in our choice, but in our fate ;
Laws are not positive; love's power, we
see,
Is nature's sanction, and her first decree. 330

Each day we break the bond of human
laws

For love, and vindicate the common cause.
Laws for defence of civil rights are placed,
Love throws the fences down and makes a
general waste :

Maids, widows, wives, without distinction
fall ;

The sweeping deluge, love, comes on and
covers all.

If then the laws of friendship I transgress,
I keep the greater, while I break the less ;
And both are mad alike, since neither can
possess.

Both hopeless to be ransomed, never
more 340

To see the sun, but as he passes o'er.

" Like Æsop's hounds contending for the
bone,

Each pleaded right, and would be lord
alone :

The fruitless fight continued all the day,
A cur came by, and snatched the prize away
As courtiers therefore juggle for a grant,
And when they break their friendship, plead
their want,

So thou, if fortune will thy suit advance,
Love on, nor envy me my equal chance :
For I must love, and am resolved to try 350
My fate, or failing in the adventure die."

Great was their strife, which hourly was
renewed,

Till each with mortal hate his rival viewed :
Now friends no more, nor walking hand in
hand ;

But when they met, they made a surly
stand ;

And glared like angry lions as they passed,
And wished that every look might be their
last.

It chanced at length, Pirithous came to
attend

This worthy Theseus, his familiar friend ;
Their love in early infancy began, 360

And rose as childhood ripened into man.
Companions of the war ; and loved so well,
That when one died, as ancient stories tell,
His fellow to redeem him went to hell.

But to pursue my tale ; to welcome home
His warlike brother is Pirithous come :
Arcite of Thebes was known in arms long
since,
And honoured by this young Thessalian
prince.

Theseus to gratify his friend and guest,
Who made our Arcite's freedom his re-
quest, 370

Restored to liberty the captive knight,
But on these hard conditions I recite :
That if hereafter Arcite should be found
Within the compass of Athenian ground,
By day or night, or on whate'er pretence,
His head should pay the forfeit of the
offence.

To this Pirithous for his friend agreed,
And on his promise was the prisoner freed.

Unpleased and pensive hence he takes
his way,

At his own peril ; for his life must pay. 380
Who now but Arcite mourns his bitter
fate,

Finds his dear purchase, and repents too
late ?

"What have I gained," he said, "in prison
pent,

If I but change my bonds for banishment ?
And banished from her sight, I suffer more
In freedom, than I felt in bonds before ;
Forced from her presence, and condemned
to live ;

Unwelcome freedom, and unthanked re-
prieve :

Heaven is not, but where Emily abides,
And where she's absent, all is hell be-
sides. 390

Next to my day of birth, was that accursed,
Which bound my friendship to Pirithous
first :

Had I not known that prince, I still had
been

In bondage, and had still Emilia seen :
For though I never can her grace deserve,
'Tis recompense enough to see and serve.
O Palamon, my kinsman and my friend,
How much more happy fates thy love
attend !

Thine is the adventure ; thine the victory :
Well has thy fortune turned the dice for
thee : 400

Thou on that angel's face may'st feed thine
eyes,

In prison, no ; but blissful paradise !

Thou daily see'st that sun of beauty shine,
And lov'st at least in love's extremest line.

I mourn in absence, love's eternal night ;

And who can tell but since thou hast her
sight,

And art a comely, young, and valiant
knight,

Fortune (a various power) may cease to
frown,

And by some ways unknown thy wishes
crown ?

But I, the most forlorn of human kind, 410
Nor help can hope, nor remedy can find ;

But doomed to drag my loathsome life in
care,

For my reward, must end it in despair ;
Fire, water, air, and earth, and force of
fates,

That governs all, and Heaven that all
creates,

Nor art, nor nature's hand can ease my
grief ;

Nothing but death, the wretch's last relief :
Then farewell youth, and all the joys that
dwell

With youth and life, and life itself farewell."

"But why, alas! do mortal men in
vain 420

Of fortune, fate, or Providence complain ?

God gives us what He knows our wants
require,

And better things than those which we
desire :

Some pray for riches ; riches they obtain ;

But, watched by robbers, for their wealth
are slain :

Some pray from prison to be freed ; and
come,

When guilty of their vows, to fall at home ;
Murdered by those they trusted with their
life,

A favoured servant, or a bosom wife.

Such dear-bought blessings happen every
day, 480

Because we know not for what things to
pray.

Like drunken sots about the street we
roam :

Well knows the sot he has a certain home :
Yet knows not how to find the uncertain
place,

And blunders on, and staggers every
pace.

Thus all seek happiness ; but few can find,
For far the greater part of men are blind.

This is my case, who thought our utmost
good

Was in one word of freedom understood :
The fatal blessing came : from prison
free, 440

I starve abroad, and lose the sight of
Emily."

Thus Arcite ; but if Arcite thus deplore
His sufferings, Palamon yet suffers more.
For when he knew his rival freed and gone,
He swells with wrath ; he makes outrageous
moan :

He frets, he fumes, he stares, he stamps
the ground ;

The hollow tower with clamours rings
round :

With briny tears he bathed his fettered feet,
And drooped all o'er with agony of sweat.

" Alas ! " he cried ; " I, wretch, in prison
pine, 450

Too happy rival, while the fruit is thine :
Thou liv'st at large, thou draw'st thy native
air,

Pleased with thy freedom, proud of my
despair :

Thou may'st, since thou hast youth and
courage joined,

A sweet behaviour and a solid mind,
Assemble ours, and all the Theban race,
To vindicate on Athens thy disgrace ;

And after, by some treaty made, possess
Fair Emily, the pledge of lasting peace.

So thine shall be the beauteous prize,
while I 460

Must languish in despair, in prison die.

Thus all the advantage of the strife is
thine,

Thy portion double joys, and double
sorrows mine."

The rage of jealousy then fired his soul,
And his face kindled like a burning coal :
Now cold despair, succeeding in her stead,
To livid paleness turns the glowing red.

His blood, scarce liquid, creeps within his
veins,

Like water which the freezing wind con-
strains.

Then thus he said : " Eternal Deities, 470
Who rule the world with absolute decrees,
And write whatever time shall bring to
pass,

With pens of adamant, on plates of brass ;
What is the race of human kind your care

Beyond what all his fellow-creatures are ?
He with the rest is liable to pain,

And like the sheep, his brother-beast, is
slain.

Cold, hunger, prisons, ills without a cure,
All these he must, and guiltless oft, endure ;
Or does your justice, power, or prescience
fail, 480

When the good suffer, and the bad pre-
vail ?

What worse to wretched virtue could befall,
If fate or giddy fortune governed all ?

Nay, worse than other beasts is our estate ;
Them, to pursue their pleasures, you create ;

We, bound by harder laws, must curb our
will,

And your commands, not our desires,
fulfil ;

Then, when the creature is unjustly slain,
Yet after death at least he feels no pain ;

But man in life surcharged with woe be-
fore, 490

Not freed when dead, is doomed to suffer
more.

A serpent shoots his sting at unaware ;
An ambushed thief forelays a traveller ;

The man lies murdered, while the thief and
snake,

One gains the thickets, and one thrids the
brake.

This let divines decide ; but well I know,
Just, or unjust, I have my share of woe,
Through Saturn, seated in a luckless place,
And Juno's wrath, that persecutes my race ;
Or Mars and Venus, in a quartile,
move 500

My pangs of jealousy for Arcite's love."

Let Palamon oppressed in bondage
mourn,

While to his exiled rival we return.

By this, the sun, declining from his height,
The day had shortened to prolong the
night :

The lengthened night gave length of misery
Both to the captive lover and the free.

For Palamon in endless prison mourns,

And Arcite forfeits life if he returns :

The banished never hopes his love to
see, 510

Nor hopes the captive lord his liberty :

'Tis hard to say who suffers greater pains :

One sees his love, but cannot break his
chains :

One free, and all his motions uncontrolled,
Beholds whate'er he would, but what he
would behold.

Judge as you please, for I will haste to
tell

What fortune to the banished knight befel.

When Arcite was to Thebes returned
again,

The loss of her he loved renewed his pain ;
What could be worse than never more to
see 520

His life, his soul, his charming Emily ?

He raved with all the madness of despair,
He roared, he beat his breast, he tore his
hair.

Dry sorrow in his stupid eyes appears,
For, wanting nourishment, he wanted tears :
His eyeballs in their hollow sockets sink,
Bereft of sleep, he loathes his meat and
drink.

He withers at his heart, and looks as wan
As the pale spectre of a murdered man :
That pale turns yellow, and his face re-
ceives 530

The faded hue of sapless boxen leaves :

In solitary groves he makes his moan,

Walks early out, and ever is alone :

Nor, mixed in mirth, in youthful pleasures
shares,

But sighs when songs and instruments he
hears.

His spirits are so low, his voice is drowned,

He hears as from afar, or in a swoond,

Like the deaf murmurs of a distant sound :

Uncombed his locks, and squalid his attire,

Unlike the trim of love and gay desire ; 540

But full of museful mopings, which presage

The loss of reason, and conclude in rage.

This when he had endured a year and more,

Now wholly changed from what he was be-
fore,

It happened once, that, slumbering as he lay,

He dreamed (his dream began at break of
day)

That Hermes o'er his head in air appeared,

And with soft words his drooping spirits
cheered,

His hat, adorned with wings, disclosed the
god,

And in his hand he bore the sleep-com-
pelling rod : 560

Such as he seemed when, at his sire's com-
mand,

On Argus' head he laid the snaky wand.

"Arise," he said, "to conquering Athens go,

There fate appoints an end to all thy woe."

The fright awakened Arcite with a start,

Against his bosom bounced his heaving
heart ;

But soon he said, with scarce recovered
breath,

"And thither will I go to meet my death,

Sure to be slain ; but death is my desire,

Since in Emilia's sight I shall expire." 580

By chance he spied a mirror while he spoke,

And gazing there beheld his altered look :

Wondering, he saw his features and his
hue

So much were changed, that scarce himself
he knew.

A sudden thought then starting in his
mind,

"Since I in Arcite cannot Arcite find,

The world may search in vain with all their eyes,

But never penetrate through this disguise.
Thanks to the change which grief and sickness give,

In low estate I may securely live, 570
And see unknown my mistress day by day."
He said; and clothed himself in coarse array:

A labouring hind in show; then forth he went,

And to the Athenian towers his journey bent:

One squire attended in the same disguise,
Made conscious of his master's enterprise.
Arrived at Athens, soon he came to court,
Unknown, unquestioned in that thick resort:
Proffering for hire his service at the gate,
To drudge, draw water, and to run or wait. 580

So fair befel him, that for little gain
He served at first Emilia's chamberlain;
And, watchful all advantages to spy,
Was still at hand, and in his master's eye;
And as his bones were big, and sinews strong,

Refused no toil that could to slaves belong;
But from deep wells with engines water drew,

And used his noble hands the wood to hew,
He passed a year at least attending thus
On Emily, and called Philostratus. 590

But never was there man of his degree
So much esteemed, so well beloved as he.
So gentle of condition was he known,
That through the court his courtesy was blown:

All think him worthy of a greater place,
And recommend him to the royal grace:
That exercised within a higher sphere,
His virtues more conspicuous might appear.
Thus by the general voice was Arcite praised,
And by great Theseus to high favour raised; 600

Among his menial servants first enrolled,
And largely entertained with sums of gold:
Besides what secretly from Thebes was sent,
Of his own income, and his annual rent:

This well employed, he purchased friends
and fame,

But cautiously concealed from whence it came,

Thus for three years he lived with large increase,

In arms of honour, and esteem in peace;

To Theseus' person he was ever near;
And Theseus for his virtues held him dear. 610

BOOK II.

WHILE Arcite lives in bliss, the story turns
Where hopeless Palamon in prison mourns.
For six long years immured, the captive knight

Had dragged his chains, and scarcely seen
the light:

Lost liberty and love at once he bore:

His prison pained him much, his passion more:

Nor dares he hope his fetters to remove,
Nor ever wishes to be free from love.

But when the sixth revolving year was run,

And May within the Twins received the sun, 620

Were it by chance, or forceful destiny,
Which forms in causes first whate'er shall be,

Assisted by a friend, one moonless night,
This Palamon from prison took his flight:
A pleasant beverage he prepared before,
Of wine and honey mixed with added store
Of opium; to his keeper this he brought,
Who swallowed unaware the sleepy draught,
And snored secure till morn, his senses bound 630

In slumber, and in long oblivion drowned.
Short was the night, and careful Palamon
Sought the next covert ere the rising sun.
A thick-spread forest near the city lay,
To this with lengthened strides he took his way,

(For far he could not fly, and feared the day.)

Safe from pursuit, he meant to shun the light,

Till the brown shadows of the friendly night
To Thebes might favour his intended flight.
When to his country come, his next design
Was all the Theban race in arms to join, 640
And war on Theseus, till he lost his life,
Or won the beauteous Emily to wife.
Thus while his thoughts the lingering day
beguile,

To gentle Arcite let us turn our style;
Who little dreamt how nigh he was to care,
Till treacherous fortune caught him in the
snare.

The morning lark, the messenger of day,
Saluted in her song the morning gray;
And soon the sun arose with beams so
bright,

That all the horizon laughed to see the joy-
ous sight; 650

He with his tepid rays the rose renews,
And licks the dropping leaves, and dries
the dews;

When Arcite left his bed, resolved to pay
Observance to the month of merry May:
Forth on his fiery steed betimes he rode,
That scarcely prints the turf on which he
trod:

At ease he seemed, and, prancing o'er the
plains,

Turned only to the grove his horse's reins,
The grove I named before; and, lighted
there,

A woodbine garland sought to crown his
hair; 660

Then turned his face against the rising day,
And raised his voice to welcome in the
May.

"For thee, sweet month, the groves green
liveries wear,

If not the first, the fairest of the year:
For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours,
And Nature's ready pencil paints the
flowers:

When thy short reign is past, the feverish
sun

The sultry tropic fears, and moves more
slowly on.

So may thy tender blossoms fear no blight,
Nor goats with venom'd teeth thy tendrils
bite, 670

As thou shalt guide my wandering feet to
find

The fragrant greens I seek, my brows to
bind."

His vows addressed, within the grove he
strayed,

Till Fate or Fortune near the place conveyed
His steps where secret Palamon was laid.
Full little thought him of the gentle knight,
Who, flying death, had there concealed his
flight,

In brakes and brambles hid, and shunning
mortal sight.

And less he knew him for his hated foe,
But feared him as a man he did not
know. 680

But as it has been said of ancient years,
The fields are full of eyes, and woods have
ears;

For this the wise are ever on their guard,
For, unforeseen, they say, is unprepared.
Uncautious Arcite thought himself alone,
And less than all suspected Palamon;
Who listening heard him, while he searched
the grove,

And loudly sung his roundelay of love:
But on the sudden stopped, and silent stood,
As lovers often muse, and change their
mood; 690

Now high as heaven, and then as low as
hell;

Now up, now down, as buckets in a well;
For Venus, like her day, will change her
cheer,

And seldom shall we see a Friday clear.
Thus Arcite having sung, with altered hue
Sunk on the ground, and from his bosom
drew

A desperate sigh, accusing Heaven and Fate,
And angry Juno's unrelenting hate.

"Cursed be the day when first I did ap-
pear;

Let it be blotted from the calendar, 700
Lest it pollute the month, and poison all
the year.

Still will the jealous Queen pursue our race?
 Cadmus is dead, the Theban city was :
 Yet ceases not her hate : for all who come
 From Cadmus are involved in Cadmus'
 doom.

I suffer for my blood : unjust decree !
 That punishes another's crime on me.
 In mean estate I serve my mortal foe,
 The man who caused my country's over-
 throw.

This is not all ; for Juno, to my shame, 710
 Has forced me to forsake my former name ;
 Arcite I was, Philostratus I am.

That side of Heaven is all my enemy ;
 Mars ruined Thebes : his mother ruined me.
 Of all the royal race remains but one
 Besides myself, the unhappy Palamon,
 Whom Theseus holds in bonds, and will
 not free ;

Without a crime, except his kin to me.
 Yet these, and all the rest, I could endure ;
 But love's a malady without a cure ; 720
 Fierce Love has pierced me with his fiery
 dart,

He fies within, and hisses at my heart.
 Your eyes, fair Emily, my fate pursue ;
 I suffer for the rest, I die for you.
 Of such a goddess no time leaves record,
 Who burned the temple where she was
 adored :

And let it burn, I never will complain,
 Pleased with my sufferings, if you knew my
 pain."

At this a sickly qualm his heart assailed,
 His ears ring inward, and his senses
 failed. 730

No word missed Palamon of all he spoke,
 But soon to deadly pale he changed his
 look :

He trembled every limb, and felt a smart,
 As if cold steel had glided through his
 heart ;

Nor longer stood, but starting from his
 place,
 Discovered stood, and showed his hostile
 face :

"False traitor Arcite, traitor to thy blood,
 Bound by thy sacred oath to seek my good,

Now art thou found forsworn, for Emily ;
 And darest attempt her love, for whom I
 die. 740

So hast thou cheated Theseus with a wife,
 Against thy vow, returning to beguile
 Under a borrowed name : as false to me,
 So false thou art to him who set thee free :
 But rest assured, that either thou shalt die,
 Or else renounce thy claim in Emily ;
 For though unarmed I am, and (freed by
 chance)

Am here without my sword, or pointed
 lance :

Hope not, base man, unquestioned hence
 to go,

For I am Palamon, thy mortal foe." 750
 Arcite, who heard his tale, and knew the
 man,

His sword unsheathed, and fiercely thus
 began :

"Now, by the gods, who govern heaven
 above,

Wert thou not weak with hunger, mad with
 love,

That word had been thy last, or in this
 grove

This hand should force thee to renounce
 thy love.

The surety which I gave thee, I defy :
 Fool, not to know that love endures no tie,
 And Jove but laughs at lovers' perjury.

Know I will serve the fair in thy de-
 spite ; 760

But since thou art my kinsman, and a
 knight,

Here, have my faith ; to-morrow in this
 grove

Our arms shall plead the titles of our love :
 And Heaven so help my right, as I alone
 Will come ; and keep the cause and quarrel
 both unknown,

With arms of proof both for myself and
 thee ;

Choose thou the best, and leave the worst
 to me.

And, that at better ease thou may'st abide,
 Bedding and clothes I will this night pro-
 vide,

And needful sustenance, that thou may'st
 be 770
 A conquest better won, and worthy me."
 His promise Palamon accepts ; but prayed,
 To keep it better than the first he made.
 Thus fair they parted till the morrow's
 dawn,
 For each had laid his plighted faith to
 pawn.
 Oh Love ! thou sternly dost thy power
 maintain,
 And wilt not bear a rival in thy reign,
 Tyrants and thou all fellowship disdain.
 This was in Arcite proved, and Palamon,
 Both in despair, yet each would love
 alone. 780
 Arcite returned, and, as in honour tied,
 His foe with bedding, and with food
 supplied ;
 Then, ere the day, two suits of armour
 sought,
 Which borne before him on his steed he
 brought :
 Both were of shining steel, and wrought so
 pure,
 As might the strokes of two such arms en-
 dure.
 Now, at the time, and in the appointed
 place,
 The challenger and challenged, face to
 face,
 Approach ; each other from afar they
 knew,
 And from afar their hatred changed their
 hue. 790
 So stands the Thracian herdsman with his
 spear,
 Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
 And hears him rustling in the wood, and
 sees
 His course at distance by the bending trees ;
 And thinks, " Here comes my mortal
 enemy,
 And either he must fall in fight, or I : "
 This while he thinks, he lifts aloft his dart ;
 A generous chillness seizes every part :
 The veins pour back the blood, and fortify
 the heart.

Thus pale they meet ; their eyes with
 fury burn ; 800
 None greets ; for none the greeting will re-
 turn :
 But in dumb surliness, each armed with
 care
 His foe professed, as brother of the war :
 Then both, no moment lost, at once ad-
 vance
 Against each other, armed with sword and
 lance :
 They lash, they foin, they pass, they strive
 to bore
 Their corslets, and the thinnest parts ex-
 plore.
 Thus two long hours in equal arms they
 stood,
 And, wounded, wound ; till both were
 bathed in blood ;
 And not a foot of ground had either
 got, 810
 As if the world depended on the spot.
 Fell Arcite like an angry tiger fared,
 And like a lion Palamon appeared :
 Or, as two boars, whom love to battle
 draws,
 With rising bristles, and with frothy jaws,
 Their adverse breasts with tusks oblique
 they wound ;
 With grunts and groans the forest rings
 around.
 So fought the knights, and fighting must
 abide,
 Till fate an umpire sends their difference to
 decide.
 The power that ministers to God's de-
 crees, 820
 And executes on earth what Heaven fore-
 sees,
 Called Providence, or Chance, or Fatal
 Sway,
 Comes with resistless force, and finds or
 makes her way.
 Nor kings, nor nations, nor united power,
 One moment can retard the appointed hour,
 And some one day, some wondrous chance
 appears,
 Which happened not in centuries of years :

For sure, whate'er we mortals hate, or love,
Or hope, or fear, depends on Powers above ;
They move our appetites to good or ill, 830
And by foresight necessitate the will.

In Theseus this appears ; whose youthful
joy
Was beasts of chase in forests to destroy ;
This gentle knight, inspired by jolly May,
Forsook his easy couch at early day,
And to the wood and wilds pursued his
way.

Beside him rode Hippolita the queen,
And Emily attired in lively green,
With horns, and hounds, and all the tune-
ful cry,

To hunt a royal hart within the covert
nigh : 840

And as he followed Mars before, so now
He serves the goddess of the silver bow.
The way that Theseus took was to the
wood

Where the two knights in cruel battle
stood :

The laund on which they fought, the
appointed place
In which the uncoupled hounds began the
chase.

Thither forth-right he rode to rouse the
prey,
That shaded by the fern in harbour lay ;
And thence dislodged, was wont to leave
the wood,

For open fields, and cross the crystal
flood. 850

Approached, and looking underneath the
sun,

He saw proud Arcite, and fierce Palamon,
In mortal battle doubling blow on blow ;
Like lightning flamed their fauchions to
and fro,

And shot a dreadful gleam ; so strong they
strook,

There seemed less force required to fell an
oak :

He gazed with wonder on their equal
might,

Looked eager on, but knew not either
knight.

Resolved to learn, he spurred his fiery
steed

With goring rowels to provoke his speed. 860
The minute ended that began the race,
So soon he was betwixt 'em on the place ;
And with his sword unsheathed, on pain of
life

Commands both combatants to cease their
strife :

Then with imperious tone pursues his
threat ;

"What are you? why in arms together
met?

How dares your pride presume against my
laws,

As in a listed field to fight your cause?

Unasked the royal grant ; no marshal by,
As knightly rites require ; nor judge to
try?" 870

Then Palamon, with scarce recovered
breath,

Thus hasty spoke : "We both deserve the
death,

And both would die ; for look the world
around,

A pair so wretched is not to be found.

Our life's a load ; encumbered with the
charge,

We long to set the imprisoned soul at
large.

Now, as thou art a sovereign judge, de-
cree

The rightful doom of death to him and
me ;

Let neither find thy grace ; for grace is
cruelty.

Me first, oh, kill me first ; and cure my
woe : 880

Then sheathe the sword of justice on my
foe :

Or kill him first ; for when his name is
heard.

He foremost will receive his due reward.

Arcite of Thebes is he ; thy mortal foe :

On whom thy grace did liberty bestow,

But first contracted, that if ever found

By day or night upon the Athenian
ground,

His head should pay the forfeit ; see re-
 turned
 The perjured knight, his oath and honour
 scorned.
 For this is he, who, with a borrowed
 name 890
 And proffered service, to thy palace came,
 Now called Philostratus : retained by
 thee,
 A traitor trusted, and in high degree,
 Aspiring to the bed of beauteous Emily.
 My part remains ; from Thebes my birth I
 own,
 And call myself the unhappy Palamon.
 Think me not like that man ; since no dis-
 grace
 Can force me to renounce the honour of
 my race.
 Know me for what I am : I broke my
 chain,
 Nor promised I thy prisoner to remain : 900
 The love of liberty with life is given,
 And life itself the inferior gift of Heaven.
 Thus without crime I fled ; but farther
 know,
 I, with this Arcite, am thy mortal foe :
 Then give me death, since I thy life pur-
 sue ;
 For safeguard of thyself, death is my due.
 More wouldst thou know ? I love bright
 Emily,
 And, for her sake, and in her sight, will
 die :
 But kill my rival too ; for he no less
 Deserves ; and I thy righteous doom will
 bless, 910
 Assured that what I lose, he never shall
 possess."
 To this replied the stern Athenian prince,
 And sourly smiled : " In owning your
 offence
 You judge yourself ; and I but keep re-
 cord
 In place of law, while you pronounce the
 word.
 Take your desert, the death you have de-
 creed ;
 I seal your doom, and ratify the deed :
 By Mars, the patron of my arms, you
 die."
 He said ; dumb sorrow seized the standers-
 by.
 The queen above the rest, by nature
 good, 920
 (The pattern formed of perfect woman-
 hood)
 For tender pity wept : when she began,
 Through the bright quire the infectious
 virtue ran.
 All dropped their tears, even the contended
 maid :
 And thus among themselves they softly
 said :
 " What eyes can suffer this unworthy
 sight !
 Two youths of royal blood, renowned in
 fight,
 The mastership of Heaven in face and
 mind,
 And lovers, far beyond their faithless kind :
 See their wide-streaming wounds : they
 neither came 930
 From pride of empire, nor desire of fame :
 Kings fight for kingdoms, madmen for
 applause :
 But love for love alone ; that crowns the
 lover's cause."
 This thought, which ever bribes the beau-
 teous kind,
 Such pity wrought in every lady's mind,
 They left their steeds, and prostrate on the
 place,
 From the fierce king implored the offenders'
 grace.
 He paused a while, stood silent in his
 mood,
 (For yet his rage was boiling in his
 blood ;)
 But soon his tender mind the impression
 felt, 940
 (As softest metals are not slow to melt,
 And pity soonest runs in gentle minds :)
 Then reasons with himself ; and first he
 finds
 His passion cast a mist before his sense,
 And either made, or magnified the offence.

Offence? of what? to whom? who judged
the cause?

The prisoner freed himself by Nature's laws:
Born free, he sought his right: the man he
freed

Was perjured, but his love excused the
deed:

Thus pondering, he looked under with his
eyes, 950

And saw the women's tears, and heard
their cries;

Which moved compassion more; he shook
his head,

And softly sighing to himself he said:

"Curse on the unpardoning prince, whom
tears can draw

To no remorse; who rules by lions' law;
And deaf to prayers, by no submission
bowed,

Rends all alike; the penitent, and proud!"
At this, with look serene, he raised his
head;

Reason resumed her place, and passion
fled:

Then thus aloud he spoke: "The power of
love, 960

In earth, and seas, and air, and heaven
above,

Rules, unresisted, with an awful nod;
By daily miracles declared a god:
He blinds the wise, gives eyesight to the
blind;

And moulds and stamps anew the lover's
mind.

Behold that Arcite, and this Palamon,
Freed from my fetters, and in safety gone,
What hindered either in their native soil
At ease to reap the harvest of their toil?

But Love, their lord, did otherwise or-
dain, 970

And brought 'em in their own despite
again,

To suffer death deserved; for well they
know,

"Tis in my power, and I their deadly foe.
The proverb holds, that to be wise and
love,

Is hardly granted to the gods above.

See how the madmen bleed! behold the
gains

With which their master, Love, rewards
their pains.

For seven long years, on duty every day,
Lo! their obedience, and their monarch's
pay:

Yet, as in duty bound, they serve him
on; 980

And—ask the fools—they think it wisely
done;

Nor ease, nor wealth, nor life itself, re-
gard,

For 'tis their maxim, Love is love's reward.
This is not all; the fair, for whom they
strove,

Nor knew before nor could suspect their
love,

Nor thought, when she beheld the fight
from far,

Her beauty was the occasion of the war.

But sure a general doom on man is passed,
And all are fools and lovers, first or last:

This both by others and myself, I know, 990
For I have served their sovereign long
ago;

Oft have been caught within the winding
train

Of female snares, and felt the lover's pain,
And learned how far the god can human
hearts constrain.

To this remembrance, and the prayers of
those,

Who for the offending warriors interpose,
I give their forfeit lives; on this accord,
To do me homage as their sovereign lord;
And as my vassals, to their utmost might,
Assist my person, and assert my right." 1000
This freely sworn, the knights their grace
obtained.

Then thus the king his secret thoughts
explained:

"If wealth, or honour, or a royal race,
Or each, or all may win a lady's grace,
Then either of you knights may well
deserve

A princess born; and such is she you
serve:

For Emily is sister to the crown,
And but too well to both her beauty
known :

But should you combat till you both were
dead,

Two lovers cannot share a single bed : 1010

As therefore both are equal in degree,

The lot of both be left to destiny.

Now hear the award, and happy may it
prove

To her, and him who best deserves her
love.

Depart from hence in peace, and, free as
air,

Search the wide world, and where you
please repair ;

But on the day when this returning sun

To the same point through every sign has
run,

Then each of you his hundred knights shall
bring,

In royal lists to fight before the king ; 1020

And then the knight, whom fate or happy
chance

Shall with his friends to victory advance,

And grace his arms so far in equal fight,

From out the bars to force his opposite,

Or kill, or make him recreant on the
plain,

The prize of valour and of love shall gain ;

The vanquished party shall their claim
release,

And the long jars conclude in lasting peace.

The charge be mine to adorn the chosen
ground,

The theatre of war, for champions so
renowned ; 1030

And take the patron's place, of either
knight,

With eyes impartial to behold the fight ;

And Heaven of me so judge as I shall
judge aright.

If both are satisfied with this accord,

Swear by the laws of knighthood on my
sword."

Who now but Palamon exults with joy ?
And ravished Arcite seems to touch the
sky :

The whole assembled troop was pleased as
well,

Extolled the award, and on their knees they
fell

To bless the gracious king. The knights
with leave 1040

Departing from the place, his last com-
mands receive ;

On Emily with equal ardour look,

And from her eyes their inspiration took.

From thence to Thebes' old walls pursue
their way,

Each to provide his champions for the day.
It might be deemed, on our historian's
part,

Or too much negligence, or want of art,

If he forgot the vast magnificence

Of royal Theseus, and his large expense.

He first enclosed for lists a level ground, 1050

The whole circumference a mile around ;

The form was circular ; and all without
A trench was sunk, to moat the place
about,

Within an amphitheatre appeared,

Raised in degrees, to sixty paces reared :

That when a man was placed in one
degree,

Height was allowed for him above to see.

Eastward was built a gate of marble
white ;

The like adorned the western opposite.

A nobler object than this fabric was, 1060
Rome never saw ; nor of so vast a space.

For rich with spoils of many a conquered
land,

All arts and artists Theseus could com-
mand ;

Who sold for hire, or wrought for better
fame ;

The master painters, and the carvers,
came.

So rose within the compass of the year

An age's work, a glorious theatre.

Then o'er its eastern gate was raised above

A temple, sacred to the Queen of Love ;

An altar stood below : on either hand 1070

A priest with roses crowned, who held a
myrtle wand.

The dome of Mars was on the gate
opposed,
And on the north a turret was enclosed,
Within the walls of alabaster white,
And crimson coral for the Queen of Night,
Who takes in sylvan sports her chaste
delight.

Within these oratories might you see
Rich carvings, portraitures, and imagery :
Where every figure to the life expressed
The godhead's power to whom it was
addressed. 1080

In Venus' temple on the sides were seen
The broken slumbers of enamoured men,
Prayers that even spoke, and pity seemed
to call,
And issuing sighs that smoked along the
wall.

Complaints and hot desires, the lover's hell,
And scalding tears that wore a channel
where they fell :

And all around were nuptial bonds, the
ties

Of love's assurance ; and a train of lies,
That, made in lust, conclude in perjuries.
Beauty, and Youth, and Wealth, and
Luxury, 1090

And sprightly Hope, and short-enduring
Joy ;

And Sorceries to raise the infernal powers,
And Sigils framed in planetary hours :
Expense, and After-thought, and idle Care,
And Doubts of motley hue, and Dark
Despair ;

Suspensions, and fantastical Surmise,
And Jealousy suffused, with jaundice in
her eyes,

Discolouring all she viewed, in tawny
dressed ;

Down-looked, and with a cuckoo on her
fist.

Opposed to her, on t' other side advance 1100
The costly feast, the carol, and the dance,
Minstrels and music, poetry and play,
And balls by night, and tournaments by day.
All these were painted on the walls, and
more ;

With acts and monuments of times before :

And others added by prophetic doom,
And lovers yet unborn, and loves to come :
For there the Idalian mount, and Citheron,
The court of Venus, was in colours drawn :
Before the palace-gate, in careless dress 1110
And loose array, sat portress Idleness :
There, by the fount, Narcissus pined
alone ;

There Samson was ; with wiser Solomon,
And all the mighty names by love undone,
Medea's charms were there, Circean feasts,
With bowls that turned enamoured youths
to beasts :

Here might be seen, that beauty, wealth,
and wit,

And prowess to the power of love submit :
The spreading snare for all mankind is
laid ;

And lovers all betray, and are betrayed. 1120
The goddess' self some noble hand had
wrought ;

Smiling she seemed, and full of pleasing
thought :

From ocean as she first began to rise,
And smoothed the ruffled seas and cleared
the skies,

She trod the brine all bare below the
breast,

And the green waves but ill concealed the
rest.

A lute she held ; and on her head was
seen

A wreath of roses red, and myrtles green ;
Her turtles fanned the buxom air above ;
And, by his mother, stood an infant
Love, 1130

With wings unfledged ; his eyes were
banded o'er ;

His hands a bow, his back a quiver bore,
Supplied with arrows bright and keen, a
deadly store.

But in the dome of mighty Mars the red
With different figures all the sides were
spread ;

This temple, less in form, with equal grace,
Was imitative of the first in Thrace :

For that cold region was the loved abode,
And sovereign mansion of the warrior god.

The landscape was a forest wide and bare, 1140

Where neither beast nor human kind repair ;

The fowl, that scent afar, the borders fly,
And shun the bitter blast, and wheel about the sky.

A cake of scurf lies baking on the ground,
And prickly stubs, instead of trees, are found ;

Or woods with knots and knares deformed and old ;

Headless the most, and hideous to behold !

A rattling tempest through the branches went,

That stripped 'em bare, and one sole way they bent.

Heaven froze above, severe, the clouds congeal, 1150

And through the crystal vault appeared the standing hail.

Such was the face without : a mountain stood

Threatening from high, and overlooked the wood :

Beneath the lowering brow, and on a bent,
The temple stood of Mars armipotent :

The frame of burnished steel, that cast a glare

From far, and seemed to thaw the freezing air.

A straight long entry to the temple led,
Blind with high walls, and horror over head :

Thence issued such a blast, and hollow roar, 1160

As threatened from the hinge to heave the door ;

In through that door, a northern light there shone ;

'Twas all it had, for windows there were none.

The gate was adamant ; eternal frame !
Which, hewed by Mars himself, from Indian quarries came,

The labour of a god ; and all along
Tough iron plates were clenched to make it strong.

A tun about was every pillar there ;

A polished mirror shone not half so clear.

There saw I how the secret felon wrought
And treason labouring in the traitor's thought, 1170

And midwife Time the ripened plot murder brought.

There the red Anger dared the pallid Fear ;

Next stood Hypocrisy, with holy leer ;

Soft smiling, and demurely looking down,

But hid the dagger underneath the gown :

The assassinating wife, the household fiend,

And far the blackest there, the traitor-friend.

On t'other side there stood Destruction bare,

Unpunished Rapine, and a waste of war ; 1180

Contest, with sharpened knives in cloisters drawn,

And all with blood bespread the holy lawn.

Loud menaces were heard, and foul disgrace,

And bawling infamy, in language base ;

Till sense was lost in sound, and silence fled the place.

The slayer of himself yet saw I there,

The gore congealed was clotted in his hair :

With eyes half-closed, and gaping mouth he lay,

And grim, as when he breathed his sullen soul away.

In midst of all the dome, Misfortune sat, 1190

And gloomy Discontent, and fell Debate,

And Madness laughing in his ireful mood ;

And armed Complaint on theft ; and cries of blood.

There was the murdered corpse, in covert laid,

And violent death in thousand shapes displayed :

The city to the soldier's rage resigned :

Successless wars, and poverty behind :

Ships burnt in fight, or forced on rocky shores,

And the rash hunter strangled by the boars ;

The new-born babe by nurses overlaid ; 1200
And the cook caught within the raging fire
he made.

All ills of Mars his nature, flame, and
steel ;

The gasping charioteer, beneath the wheel
Of his own car ; the ruined house that falls
And intercepts her lord betwixt the walls :

The whole division that to Mars pertains,
All trades of death that deal in steel for
gains,

Were there : the butcher, armourer, and
smith,

Who forges sharpened fauchions, or the
scythe.

The scarlet Conquest on a tower was
placed, 1210

With shouts and soldiers' acclamations
graced ;

A pointed sword hung threatening o'er his
head,*

Sustain'd but by a slender twine of thread.

There saw I Mars his ides, the Capitol,

The seer in vain foretelling Cæsar's fall ;

The last Triumvirs, and the wars they
move,

And Antony, who lost the world for love.

These, and a thousand more, the fane
adorn ;

Their fates were painted ere the men were
born,

All copied from the heavens, and ruling
force 1220

Of the Red Star, in his revolving course.

The form of Mars high on a chariot stood,

All sheathed in arms, and gruffly looked
the god :

Two geomantic figures were displayed

Above his head, a warrior and a maid,†

One when direct, and one when retrograde.

Tired with deformities of death, I haste

To the third temple of Diana chaste.

* *A pointed sword hung threatening o'er his
head,*

"*Districtus ensis cui super implâ
Service pendet.*"—HOR. *lib. iii. Od. 1.*

JOHN WARTON.

† *Rubeus and Puella.*—DRYDEN.

A sylvan scene with various greens was
drawn,

Shades on the sides, and in the midst
a lawn : 1230

The silver Cynthia, with her nymphs
around,

Pursued the flying deer, the woods with
horns resound :

Calisto there stood manifest of shame,

And, turned a bear, the northern star
became :

Her son was next, and, by peculiar grace,

In the cold circle held the second place :

The stag Actæon in the stream had spied

The naked huntress, and, for seeing, died :

His hounds, unknowing of his change,
pursue

The chase, and their mistaken master
slew. 1240

Peneian Daphne too was there to see,

Apollo's love before, and now his tree :

The adjoining fane the assembled Greeks
expressed,

And hunting of the Calydonian beast.

Cenides* valour, and his envied price :

The fatal power of Atalanta's eyes ;

Diana's vengeance on the victor shown,

The murderess mother, and consuming son ;

The Volscian queen extended on the plain ;

The treason punished, and the traitor
slain. 1250

* *Cenides* is another name for *Meleager*, the son of *Ceneus*, King of *Ætolia*. *Ceneus* had neglected the altars of *Diana*, and to punish him the goddess sent a huge wild boar into *Calydon*, which ravaged the whole country. The neighbouring princes assembled to hunt and kill it. Amongst them were *Meleager*, son of *Ceneus*, *Castor* and *Pollux*, *Pirithous*, *Theseus* of *Athens*, *Admetus*, *Jason*, *Nestor*, *Laertes* the father of *Ulysses*, *Meleager's* uncles, his mother's brothers, *Atalanta* of racing memory, &c., &c. These heroes united to attack the fearful boar ; *Atalanta* first wounded it. *Cenides* (*Meleager*) killed it, and chivalrously gave its head and skin to *Atalanta*. *Meleager's* uncles endeavoured to take them from her by force ; the nephew defended the maiden, and in the fight he killed his uncles. Meantime the news of *Meleager's* victory had reached his mother *Althea*. She was proceeding to the temple of the gods to give thanks for it, when she met the dead bodies of her brothers, and learned who had slain them. In

The rest were various huntings, well designed,
And savage beasts destroyed, of every kind.

The graceful goddess was arrayed in green;
About her feet were little beagles seen,
That watched with upward eyes the motions of their queen.

Her legs were buskined, and the left before
In act to shoot; a silver bow she bore,
And at her back a painted quiver wore.

She trod a waxing moon, that soon would wane,

And, drinking borrowed light, be filled again : 1260

With downcast eyes, as seeming to survey
The dark dominions, her alternate sway,
Before her stood a woman in her throes,
And called Lucina's aid her burthen to disclose.

All these the painter drew with such command,

That Nature snatched the pencil from his hand,

Ashamed and angry that his art could feign

And mend the tortures of a mother's pain.
Theseus beheld the fanes of every god,

And thought his mighty cost was well bestowed. 1270

So princes now their poets should regard;
But few can write, and fewer can reward.

The theatre thus raised, the lists enclosed,

And all with vast magnificence disposed,
We leave the monarch pleased, and haste to bring

The knights to combat, and their arms to sing.

her anger she threw into the fire a brand that the Fate Atropos had given her to keep, as her son's life depended on its preservation. The brand consumed, and when the last spark went out the slayer of the Calydonian boar died.

The story of the brand is not in Homer.—See HOM. *Il.* ix., v. 539 and 562. See OVID, *Melaeus* and *Atalanta*.

Camilla was "the Volscian Queen." In assisting Turnus against Æneas, she was slain.—*Æn.* vii., v. 803, &c.

BOOK III.

THE day approached when fortune should decide

The important enterprise, and give the bride;

For now, the rivals round the world had sought,

And each his number, well appointed, brought. 1280

The nations, far and near, contend in choice,

And send the flower of war by public voice;

That after, or before, were never known
Such chiefs, as each an army seemed alone:

Beside the champions, all of high degree,
Who knighthood loved, and deeds of chivalry,

Thronged to the lists, and envied to behold
The names of others, not their own, enrolled.

Nor seems it strange; for every noble knight

Who loves the fair, and is endued with might, 1290

In such a quarrel would be proud to fight.
There breathes not scarce a man on British ground

(An isle for love, and arms, of old renowned)
But would have sold his life to purchase fame,

To Palamon or Arcite sent his name.

And had the land selected of the best,
Half had come hence, and let the world provide the rest.

A hundred knights with Palamon there came,

Approved in fight, and men of mighty name;

Their arms were several, as their nations were, 1300

But furnished all alike with sword and spear.
Some wore coat-armour, imitating scale;

And next their skins were stubborn shirts of mail.

Some wore a breast-plate and a light jupon,
 Their horses clothed with rich caparison :
 Some for defence would leathern bucklers use,

Of folded hides ; and others shields of
 Pruce.

One hung a pole-axe at his saddle-bow,
 And one a heavy mace to shun the foe ;
 One for his legs and knees provided
 well, 1310

With jambeaux armed, and double plates
 of steel :

This on his helmet wore a lady's glove,
 And that a sleeve embroidered by his
 love.

With Palamon above the rest in place,
 Lycurgus came, the surly king of Thrace ;
 Black was his beard, and manly was his
 face ;

The balls of his broad eyes rolled in his
 head,

And glared betwixt a yellow and a red :
 He looked a lion with a gloomy stare,
 And o'er his eye-brows hung his matted
 hair : 1320

Big-boned, and large of limbs, with sinews
 strong,

Broad-shouldered, and his arms were round
 and long.

Four milk-white bulls (the Thracian use of
 old)

Were yoked to draw his car of burnished
 gold.

Upright he stood, and bore aloft his shield,
 Conspicuous from afar, and overlooked the
 field.

His surcoat was a bear-skin on his back ;
 His hair hung long behind, and glossy
 raven black.

His ample forehead bore a coronet
 With sparkling diamonds, and with rubies
 set : 1330

Ten brace, and more, of greyhounds,
 snowy fair,

And tall as stags, ran loose, and coursed
 around his chair,

A match for pards in flight, in grappling
 for the bear :

With golden muzzles all their mouths were
 bound,

And collars of the same their necks sur-
 round.

Thus through the fields Lycurgus took his
 way ;

His hundred knights attend in pomp and
 proud array.

To match this monarch, with strong Arcite
 came

Emetrius, king of Inde, a mighty name,
 On a bay courser, goodly to behold, 1340

The trappings of his horse adorned with
 barbarous gold.

Not Mars bestrode a steed with greater
 grace ;

His surcoat o'er his arms was cloth of
 Thrace,

Adorned with pearls, all orient, round, and
 great ;

His saddle was of gold, with emeralds set,
 His shoulders large a mantle did attire,
 With rubies thick, and sparkling as the
 fire :

His amber-coloured locks in ringlets run,
 With graceful negligence, and shone against
 the sun.

His nose was aquiline, his eyes were
 blue, 1350

Ruddy his lips, and fresh and fair his hue :
 Some sprinkled freckles on his face were
 seen,

Whose dusk set off the whiteness of the
 skin :

His awful presence did the crowd surprise,
 Nor durst the rash spectator meet his eyes :
 Eyes that confessed him born for kingly
 sway,

So fierce, they flashed intolerable day.

His age in nature's youthful prime appeared,
 And just began to bloom his yellow beard.

Whene'er he spoke, his voice was heard
 around, 1360

Loud as a trumpet, with a silver sound :

A laurel wreathed his temples, fresh, and
 green ;

And myrtle sprigs, the marks of love, were
 mixed between.

Upon his fist he bore, for his delight.
An eagle well reclaimed, and lily white.

His hundred knights attend him to the war,

All armed for battle ; save their heads were bare.

Words and devices blazed on every shield,
And pleasing was the terror of the field,
For kings, and dukes, and barons, you might see, 1870

Like sparkling stars, though different in degree,

All for the increase of arms, and love of chivalry.

Before the king tame leopards led the way,
And troops of lions innocently play.

So Bacchus through the conquered Indies rode,

And beasts in gambols frisked before their honest god.

In this array the war of either side
Through Athens passed with military pride.
At prime, they entered on the Sunday morn ;
Rich tapestry spread the streets, and flowers the posts adorn. 1880

The town was all a jubilee of feasts ;
So Theseus willed, in honour of his guests ;
Himself with open arms the kings embraced,
Then all the rest in their degrees were graced.

No harbinger was needful for the night,
For every house was proud to lodge a knight.

I pass the royal treat, nor must relate
The gifts bestowed, nor how the champions sate ;

Who first, who last, or how the knights addressed

Their vows, or who was fairest at the feast ; 1890

Whose voice, whose graceful dance did most surprise,

Soft amorous sighs, and silent love of eyes.
The rivals call my Muse another way,

To sing their vigils for the ensuing day.
'Twas ebbing darkness, past the noon of night :

And Phosphor, on the confines of the light,

Promised the sun ; ere day began to spring,
The tuneful lark already stretched her wing,
And flickering on her nest made short essays to sing.

When wakeful Palamon, preventing day, 1400

Took to the royal lists his early way,
To Venus at her fane, in her own house, to pray.

There, falling on his knees before her shrine,
He thus implored with prayers her power divine :

" Creator Venus, genial power of love,
The bliss of men below, and gods above !
Beneath the sliding sun thou runn'st thy race,

Dost fairest shine, and best become thy place.

For thee the winds their eastern blasts forbear,

Thy month reveals the spring, and opens all the year. 1410

Thee, goddess, thee the storms of winter fly,
Earth smiles with flowers renewing, laughs the sky,

And birds to lays of love their tuneful notes apply.

For thee the lion loathes the taste of blood,
And roaring hunts his female through the wood ;

For thee the bulls rebellow through the groves,

And tempt the stream, and snuff their absent loves.

'Tis thine, whate'er is pleasant, good, or fair :

All nature is thy province, life thy care :
Thou madest the world, and dost the world repair. 1420

Thou gladder of the mount of Cytheron,
Increase of Jove, companion of the sun ;
If e'er Adonis touched thy tender heart,
Have pity, goddess, for thou know'st the smart,

Alas ! I have not words to tell my grief ;
To vent my sorrow would be some relief ;
Light sufferings give us leisure to complain ;
We groan, but cannot speak, in greater pain.

O goddess, tell thyself what I would say,
Thou know'st it, and I feel too much to
pray. 1430

So grant my suit, as I enforce my might,
In love to be thy champion, and thy knight ;
A servant to thy sex, a slave to thee,
A foe professed to barren chastity.
Nor ask I fame or honour of the field,
Nor choose I more to vanquish than to
yield :

In my divine Emilia make me blest,
Let Fate, or partial Chance, dispose the
rest :

Find thou the manner, and the means
prepare ;

Possession, more than conquest, is my
care. 1440

Mars is the warrior's god ; in him it lies,
On whom he favours to confer the prize ;
With smiling aspect you serenely move
In your fifth orb, and rule the realm of love.
The Fates but only spin the coarser clue,
The finest of the wool is left for you ;
Spare me but one small portion of the
twine,

And let the sisters cut below your line :
The rest among the rubbish may they
sweep,

Or add it to the yarn of some old miser's
heap, 1450

But if you this ambitious prayer deny,
(A wish, I grant, beyond mortality,)
Then let me sink beneath proud Arcite's
arms,

And I once dead, let him possess her
charms."

Thus ended he ; then with observance due
The sacred incense on her altar threw :
The curling smoke mounts heavy from the
fires ;

At length it catches flame, and in a blaze
expires ;

At once the gracious goddess gave the sign,
Her statue shook, and trembled all the
shrine : 1460

Pleased Palamon the tardy omen took ;
For, since the flames pursued the trailing
smoke,

He knew his boon was granted ; but the
day

To distance driven, and joy adjourned with
long delay.

Now morn with rosy light had streaked
the sky,

Up rose the sun, and up rose Emily ;
Addressed her early steps to Cynthia's fane,
In state attended by her maiden train,
Who bore the vests that holy rites require,
Incense, and odorous gums, and covered
fire. 1470

The plenteous horns with pleasant mead
they crown,

Nor wanted aught besides in honour of the
Moon.

Now while the temple smoked with hal-
lowed steam,

They wash the virgin in a living stream ;
The secret ceremonies I conceal,
Uncouth, perhaps unlawful, to reveal :

But such they were as pagan use required,
Performed by women when the men retired,
Whose eyes profane their chaste mysterious
rites

Might turn to scandal, or obscene de-
lights, 1480

Well-meaners think no harm ; but for the
rest,

Things sacred they pervert, and silence is
the best.

Her shining hair, uncombed, was loosely
spread,

A crown of mastless oak adorned her head :
When to the shrine approached, the spotless
maid

Had kindling fires on either altar laid :
(The rites were such as were observed of
old,

By Statius in his Theban story told.)
Then kneeling with her hands across her
breast,

Thus lowly she preferred her chaste re-
quest. 1490

"O goddess, haunter of the woodland
green,

To whom both heaven and earth and seas
are seen ;

Queen of the nether skies, where half the year
 Thy silver beams descend, and light the gloomy sphere;
 Goddess of maids, and conscious of our hearts,
 So keep me from the vengeance of thy darts,
 (Which Niobe's devoted issue felt,
 When hissing through the skies the feathered deaths were dealt,)
 As I desire to live a virgin life,
 Nor know the name of mother or of wife. 1500
 Thy votress from my tender years I am,
 And love, like thee, the woods and sylvan game.
 Like death, thou know'st, I loathe the nuptial state,
 And man, the tyrant of our sex, I hate,
 A lowly servant, but a lofty mate;
 Where love is duty on the female side;
 On theirs mere sensual gust, and sought with surly pride.
 Now by thy triple shape, as thou art seen
 In heaven, earth, hell, and everywhere a queen,
 Grant this my first desire; let discord cease, 1510
 And make betwixt the rivals lasting peace:
 Quench their hot fire, or far from me remove
 The flame, and turn it on some other love;
 Or, if my frowning stars have so decreed,
 That one must be rejected, one succeed,
 Make him my lord, within whose faithful breast
 Is fixed my image, and who loves me best.
 But oh! ev'n that avert; I choose it not,
 But take it as the least unhappy lot.
 A maid I am, and of thy virgin train; 1520
 Oh, let me still that spotless name retain!
 Frequent the forests, thy chaste will obey,
 And only make the beasts of chase my prey!"

The flames ascend on either altar clear,
 While thus the blameless maid addressed her prayer.

When lo! the burning fire that shone so bright,
 Flew off all sudden, with extinguished light,
 And left one altar dark, a little space;
 Which turned self-kindled, and renewed the blaze;
 That other victor-flame a moment stood, 1530
 Then fell, and lifeless left the extinguished wood;
 For ever lost, the irrevocable light
 Forsook the blackening coals, and sunk to night:
 At either end it whistled as it flew,
 And as the brands were green, so dropped the dew;
 Infected as it fell with sweat of sanguine hue.
 The maid from that ill omen turned her eyes,
 And with loud shrieks and clamours rent the skies,
 Nor knew what signified the boding sign,
 But found the powers displeased, and feared the wrath divine. 1540
 Then shook the sacred shrine, and sudden light
 Sprung through the vaulted roof, and made the temple bright.
 The power, behold! the power in glory shone,
 By her bent bow, and her keen arrows known;
 The rest, a huntress issuing from the wood,
 Reclining on her cornel spear she stood.
 Then gracious thus began: "Dismiss thy fear,
 And Heaven's unchanged decrees attentive hear:
 More powerful gods have torn thee from my side,
 Unwilling to resign, and doomed a bride: 1550
 The two contending knights are weighed above;
 One Mars protects, and one the Queen of Love:
 But which the man, is in the Thunderer's breast;
 This he pronounced 'Tis he who loves thee best.'

The fire that, once extinct, revived again,
Foreshows the love allotted to remain :
Farewell ! " she said, and vanished from the
place ;

The sheaf of arrows shook, and rattled in
the case.

Agghast at this, the royal virgin stood,
Disclaimed, and now no more a sister of
the wood : 1560

But to the parting goddess thus she prayed :
" Propitious still be present to my aid,
Nor quite abandon your once favoured
maid."

Then sighing she returned ; but smiled be-
twixt,

With hopes, and fears, and joys with
sorrows mixt.

The next returning planetary hour
Of Mars, who shared the heptarchy of
power,

His steps bold Arcite to the temple bent,
To adore with pagan rites the power armi-
- potent : 1570

Then prostrate, low before his altar lay,
And raised his manly voice, and thus began
to pray :

" Strong god of arms, whose iron sceptre
sways

The freezing North, and Hyperborean seas,
And Scythian colds, and Thracia's wintry
coast,

Where stand thy steeds, and thou art
honoured most ;

There most ; but everywhere thy power is
known,

The fortune of the fight is all thy own :
Terror is thine, and wild amazement,
flung

From out thy chariot, withers even the
strong :

And disarray and shameful rout ensue, 1580
And force is added to the fainting crew.

Acknowledged as thou art, accept my
prayer,

If aught I have achieved deserve thy
care :

If to my utmost power with sword and
shield

I dared the death, unknowing how to yield,
And falling in my rank, still kept the field :
Then let my arms prevail, by thee sus-
tained,

That Emily by conquest may be gained.
Have pity on my pains ; nor those unknown
To Mars, which, when a lover, were his
own. 1590

Venus, the public care of all above,
Thy stubborn heart has softened into love :
Now, by her blandishments and powerful
charms,

When yielded she lay curling in thy arms,
Even by thy shame, if shame it may be
called,

When Vulcan had thee in his net en-
thrall'd ;

(Oh envied ignominy, sweet disgrace,
When every god that saw thee wished thy
place !)

By those dear pleasures, aid my arms in fight,
And make me conquer in my patron's
right : 1600

For I am young, a novice in the trade,
The fool of love, unpractised to persuade :
And want the soothing arts that catch the
fair,

But, caught myself, lie struggling in the
snare :

And she I love, or laughs at all my pain,
Or knows her worth too well ; and pays
me with disdain.

For sure I am, unless I win in arms,
To stand excluded from Emilia's charms :
Nor can my strength avail, unless, by thee
Endued with force, I gain the victory : 1610
Then for the fire, which warmed thy gene-
- rous heart,

Pity thy subject's pains, and equal smart.
So be the morrow's sweat and labour mine,
The palm and honour of the conquest
thine :

Then shall the war, and stern debate, and
strife

Immortal, be the business of my life ;
And in thy fane, the dusty spoils among,
High on the burnished roof, my banner
shall be hung :

Ranked with my champions' bucklers, and
below,

With arms reversed, the achievements of
my foe : 1630

And while these limbs the vital spirit feeds,
While day to night, and night to day suc-
ceeds,

Thy smoking altar shall be fat with food
Of incense, and the grateful steam of
blood ;

Burnt-offerings morn and evening shall be
thine,

And fires eternal in thy temple shine.

This bush of yellow beard, this length of
hair,

Which from my birth inviolate I bear,
Guiltless of steel, and from the razor free,
Shall fall a plenteous crop, reserved for
thee. 1630

So may my arms with victory be blest,
I ask no more ; let Fate dispose the rest."

The champion ceased ; there followed in
the close

A hollow groan : a murmuring wind arose ;
The rings of iron, that on the doors were
hung,

Sent out a jarring sound, and harshly
rung :

The bolted gates flew open at the blast,
The storm rushed in, and Arcite stood
aghast :

The flames were blown aside, yet shone
they bright,

Fanned by the wind, and gave a ruffled
light. 1640

Then from the ground a scent began to
rise,

Sweet smelling as accepted sacrifice :

This omen pleased, and as the flames
aspire

With odorous incense Arcite heaps the fire :
Nor wanted hymns to Mars, or heathen
charms :

At length the nodding statue clashed his
arms,

And with a sullen sound and feeble cry,
Half sunk, and half pronounced the word
of " Victory."

For this, with soul devout, he thanked the
god,

And, of success secure, returned to his
abode. 1650

These vows thus granted, raised a strife
above,

Betwixt the God of War, and Queen of
Love.

She, granting first, had right of time to
plead ;

But he had granted too, nor would recede.
Jove was for Venus ; but he feared his wife

And seemed unwilling to decide the strife ;
Till Saturn from his leaden throne arose,

And found a way the difference to compose :
Though sparing of his grace, to mischief
bent, 1660

He seldom does a good with good intent.
Wayward, but wise ; by long experience

taught,
To please both parties, for ill ends, he
sought :

For this advantage age from youth has won,
As not to be outridden though outrun.

By fortune he has now to Venus trined,
And with stern Mars in Capricorn was
joined :

Of him disposing in his own abode,
He soothed the goddess, while he gulled
the god :

" Cease, daughter, to complain, and stint
the strife : 1670

Thy Palamon shall have his promised wife :
And Mars, the lord of conquest, in the fight
With palm and laurel shall adorn his
knight.

Wide is my course, nor turn I to my place,
Till length of time, and move with tardy
pace.

Man feels me, when I press the ethereal
plains,

My hand is heavy, and the wound remains.
Mine is the shipwreck, in a watery sign ;

And in an earthy, the dark dungeon mine.
Cold shivering agues, melancholy care,

And bitter blasting winds, and poisoned air,
Are mine, and wilful death, resulting from
despair, 1680

The throttling quinsy 'tis my star appoints,
And rheumatisms ascend to rack the joints :
When churls rebel against their native
prince,

I arm their hands, and furnish the pretence ;
And housing in the lion's hateful sign,
Bought senates, and deserting troops are
mine.

Mine is the privy poisoning ; I command
Unkindly seasons, and ungrateful land.

By me kings' palaces are pushed to
ground, 1680

And miners crushed beneath their mines
are found.

'Twas I slew Samson, when the pillared hall
Fell down, and crushed the many with the
fall.

My looking is the sire of pestilence,
That sweeps at once the people and the
prince.

Now weep no more, but trust thy grand-
sire's art,

Mars shall be pleased, and thou perform
thy part.

'Tis ill, though different your complexions
are ;

The family of Heaven for men should war."
The expedient pleased, where neither lost
his right ; 1700

Mars had the day, and Venus had the
night.

The management they left to Chronos'
care ;

Now turn we to the effect, and sing the war.
In Athens all was pleasure, mirth, and
play.

All proper to the spring, and sprightly May,
Which every soul inspired with such de-
light,

'Twas jesting all the day, and love at night.
Heaven smiled, and gladdened was the heart
of man ;

And Venus had the world as when it first
began.

At length in sleep their bodies they com-
pose, 1710

And dreamt the future fight, and early
rose.

Now scarce the dawning day began to
spring,

As at a signal given, the streets with cla-
mours ring :

At once the crowd arose ; confused and
high.

Even from the heaven was heard a shout-
ing cry ;

For Mars was early up, and roused the sky.
The gods came downward to behold the
wars,

Sharpening their sights, and leaning from
their stars.

The neighing of the generous horse was
heard,

For battle by the busy groom prepared : 1720
Rustling of harness, rattling of the shield,

Clattering of armour, furbished for the
field.

Crowds to the castle mounted up the street,
Battering the pavement with their coursers'
feet ;

The greedy sight might there devour the
gold

Of glittering arms, too dazzling to behold :
And polished steel, that cast the view aside,
And crested morions, with their plummy
pride.

Knights, with a long retinue of their
squires,

In gaudy liveries march, and quaint
attires. 1730

One laced the helm, another held the lance :
A third the shining buckler did advance.

The courser pawed the ground with restless
feet,

And snorting foamed, and champed the
golden bit.

The smiths and armourers on palfreys
ride,

Files in their hands, and hammers at their
side,

And nails for loosened spears, and thongs
for shields provide.

The yeomen guard the streets, in seemly
bands ;

And clowns come crowding on, with cudgels
in their hands,

The trumpets, next the gate, in order placed, 1740
 Attend the sign to sound the martial blast;
 The palace-yard is filled with floating tides,
 And the last comers bear the former to the sides.
 The throng is in the midst: the common crew
 Shut out, the hall admits the better few;
 In knots they stand, or in a rank they walk,
 Serious in aspect, earnest in their talk:
 Factionous, and favouring this or t'other side,
 As their strong fancy or weak reason guide:
 Their wagers back their wishes: numbers hold 1760
 With the fair freckled king, and beard of gold:
 So vigorous are his eyes, such rays they cast,
 So prominent his eagle's beak is placed.
 But most their looks on the black monarch bend,
 His rising muscles, and his brawn commend;
 His double-biting axe, and beamy spear,
 Each asking a gigantic force to rear.
 All spoke as partial favour moved the mind;
 And, safe themselves, at others' cost divined.
 Waked by the cries, the Athenian chief arose, 1780
 The knightly forms of combat to dispose;
 And passing through the obsequious guards, he sate
 Conspicuous on a throne, sublime in state;
 There, for the two contending knights he sent:
 Armed cap-a-pie, with reverence low they bent:
 He smiled on both, and with superior look
 Alike their offered adoration took.
 The people press on every side to see
 Their awful prince, and hear his high decree.
 Then signing to their heralds with his hand, 1770
 They gave his orders from their lofty stand.
 Silence is thrice enjoined; then thus aloud
 Of his at arms bespeaks the knights and crowd.

"Our sovereign lord has pondered in his mind
 The means to spare the blood of gentle kind;
 And of his grace, and inborn clemency,
 He modifies his first severe decree!
 The keener edge of battle to rebate,
 The troops for honour fighting, not for hate,
 He wills, not death should terminate their strife; 1780
 And wounds, if wounds ensue, be short of life:
 But issues, ere the fight, his dread command
 That slings afar, and poniards hand to hand,
 Be banished from the field; that none shall dare
 With shortened sword to stab in closer war;
 But in fair combat fight with manly strength,
 Nor push with biting point, but strike at length;
 The tourney is allowed but one career,
 Of the tough ash, with the sharp-grinded spear,
 But knights unhorsed may rise from off the plain, 1790
 And fight on foot their honour to regain;
 Nor, if at mischief taken, on the ground
 Be slain, but prisoners to the pillar bound,
 At either barrier placed; nor (captives made),
 Be freed, or armed anew the fight invade.
 The chief of either side, bereft of life,
 Or yielded to his foe, concludes the strife.
 Thus dooms the lord: now valiant knights and young,
 Fight each his fill with swords and maces long." 1800
 The herald ends: the vaulted firmament
 With loud acclaims and vast applause is rent:
 Heaven guard a prince so gracious and so good,
 So just, and yet so provident of blood!
 This was the general cry. The trumpets sound,
 And warlike symphony is heard around.

The marching troops through Athens take
their way,

The great earl-marshal orders their array.

The fair from high the passing pomp be-
hold ;

A rain of flowers is from the windows
rolled.

The casements are with golden tissue
spread, 1810

And horses' hoofs, for earth, on silken
tapestry tread.

The king goes midmost, and the rivals ride
In equal rank, and close his either side.

Next after these, there rode the royal
wife,

With Emily—the cause, and the reward of
strife.

The following cavalcade, by three and three,
Proceed by titles marshalled in degree.

Thus through the southern gate they take
their way,

And at the list arrived ere prime of day.

There, parting from the king, the chiefs
divide, 1820

And wheeling east and west, before their
many ride.

The Athenian monarch mounts his throne
on high,

And after him the queen and Emily :

Next these, the kindred of the crown are
graced

With nearer seats, and lords by ladies
placed.

Scarce werethey seated, when with clamours
loud

In rushed at once a rude promiscuous
crowd :

The guards, and then each other overbear,
And in a moment throng the spacious
theatre.

Now changed the jarring noise to whispers
low, 1830

As winds forsaking seas more softly blow ;
When at the western gate on which the car

Is placed aloft, that bears the god of war,
Proud Arcite, entering armed, before his
train,

Stops at the barrier, and divides the plain.

Red was his banner, and displayed abroad
The bloody colours of his patron god.

At that self moment enters Palamon

The gate of Venus, and the rising Sun ;
Waved by the wanton winds, his banner
flies, 1840

All maiden white, and shares the people's
eyes.

From east to west, look all the world
around,

Two troops so matched were never to be
found ;

Such bodies built for strength, of equal age,
In stature sized ; so proud an equipage :

The nicest eye could no distinction make,
Where lay the advantage, or what side to
take.

Thus ranged, the herald for the last pro-
claims

A silence, while they answered to their
names :

For so the king decreed, to shun with
care 1850

The fraud of musters false, the common
bane of war.

The tale was just, and then the gates were
closed ;

And chief to chief, and troop to troop op-
posed.

The heralds last retired, and loudly cried,
“ The fortune of the field be fairly tried.”

At this, the challenger with fierce defy,
His trumpet sounds ; the challenged makes
reply :

With clangour rings the field, resounds the
vaulted sky.

Their visors closed, their lances in the rest,
Or at the helmet pointed, or the crest, 1860

They vanish from the barrier, speed the race,
And spurring see decrease the middle space.

A cloud of smoke envelopes either host,

And all at once the combatants are lost :

Darkling they join adverse, and shock
unseen,

Couriers with couriers justling, men with
men :

As labouring in eclipse, a while they stay,

Till the next blast of wind restores the day.

They look anew: the beauteous form of fight
Is changed, and war appears a grisly
sight. 1870

Two troops in fair array one moment
showed,

The next, a field with fallen bodies strowed:
Not half the number in their seats are
found;

But men and steeds lie grovelling on the
ground.

The points of spears are stuck within the
shield,

The steeds without their riders scour the
field.

The knights, unhorsed, on foot renew the
fight;

The glittering fauchions cast a gleaming
light:

Hauberks and helms are hewed with many
a wound,

Out spins the streaming blood and dyes
the ground. 1880

The mighty maces with such haste descend,
They break the bones, and make the solid
armour bend.

This thrusts amid the throng with furious
force;

Down goes, at once, the horseman and the
horse:

That courser stumbles on the fallen steed,
And floundering throws the rider o'er his
head.

One rolls along, a foot-ball to his foes;
One with a broken truncheon deals his
blows.

This halting, this disabled with his wound,
In triumph led, is to the pillar bound, 1890
Where by the king's award he must abide:
There goes a captive led on t'other side.

By fits they cease; and leaning on the
lance,

Take breath a while, and to new fight
advance.

Full oft the rivals met, and neither
spared

His utmost force, and each forgot to ward.
The head of this was to the saddle bent,
That other backward to the crupper sent:

Both were by turns unhorsed; the jealous
blows

Fall thick and heavy, when on foot they
close. 1900

So deep their fauchions bite, that every
stroke

Pierced to the quick; and equal wounds
they gave and took.

Borne far asunder by the tides of men,
Like adamant and steel they meet again.

So when the tiger sucks the bullock's
blood,

A famished lion issuing from the wood
Roars lordly fierce, and challenges the food.

Each claims possession, neither will obey,
But both their paws are fastened on the
prey;

They bite, they tear; and while, in vain,
they strive, 1910

The swains come armed between, and both
to distance drive.

At length, as Fate foredoomed, and all
things tend

By course of time to their appointed end;
So when the sun to west was far declined,

And both afresh in mortal battle joined,
The strong Emetrius came in Arcite's aid,

And Palamon with odds was overlaid:
For turning short, he struck with all his
might

Full on the helmet of the unwary knight.
Deep was the wound; he staggered with
the blow, 1920

And turned him to his unexpected foe;
Whom with such force he struck, he felled
him down,

And cleft the circle of his golden crown.
But Arcite's men, who now prevailed in
fight,

Twice ten, at once surround the single
knight:

O'erpowered, at length, they force him to
the ground,

Unyielded as he was, and to the pillar
bound;

And king Lycurgus, while he fought in vain
His friend to free, was tumbled on the
plain.

Who now laments but Palamon, com-
pelled 1890

No more to try the fortune of the field !
And, worse than death, to view with hate-
ful eyes
His rival's conquest, and renounce the
prize !

The royal judge on his tribunal placed,
Who had beheld the fight from first to last,
Bade cease the war ; pronouncing from on
high,

Arcite of Thebes had won the beauteous
Emily.

The sound of trumpets to the voice replied,
And round the royal lists the heralds
cried,

" Arcite of Thebes has won the beauteous
bride." 1940

The people rend the skies with vast
applause ;

All own the chief, when Fortune owns the
cause.

Arcite is owned even by the gods above,
And conquering Mars insults the Queen of
Love.

So laughed he, when the rightful Titan
failed,

And Jove's usurping arms in heaven pre-
vailed.

Laughed all the powers who favour tyranny,
And all the standing army of the sky.

But Venus with dejected eyes appears, 1850
And weeping on the lists distilled her tears ;
Her will refused, which grieves a woman
most,

And, in her champion foiled, the cause of
Love is lost.

Till Saturn said, " Fair daughter, now be
still,

The blustering fool has satisfied his will ;
His boon is given ; his knight has gained
the day,

But lost the prize, the arrears are yet to
pay.

Thy hour is come, and mine the care shall
be

To please thy knight, and set thy promise
free. "

Now while the heralds run the lists
around,

And " Arcite, Arcite ! " heaven and earth
resound ; 1900

A miracle (nor less it could be called)
Their joy with unexpected sorrow palled.

The victor knight had laid his helm aside,
Part for his ease, the greater part for pride :
Bare-headed, popularly low he bowed,
And paid the salutations of the crowd.

Then spurring at full speed, ran endlong on
Where Theseus sate on his imperial throne ;
Furious he drove, and upward cast his eye,
Where next the queen was placed his
Emily ; 1970

Then passing, to the saddle-bow he bent :
A sweet regard the gracious virgin lent ;
(For women, to the brave an easy prey,
Still follow Fortune where she leads the
way :) 1980

Just then, from earth sprung out a flashing
fire,

By Pluto sent, at Saturn's bad desire :
The startling steed was seized with sudden
fright,

And, bounding, o'er the pommel cast the
knight :

Forward he flew, and pitching on his head,
He quivered with his feet, and lay for
dead. 1990

Black was his countenance in a little space,
For all the blood was gathered in his face.
Help was at hand : they reared him from
the ground,

And from his cumbrous arms his limbs un-
bound ;

Then lanced a vein, and watched returning
breath ;

It came, but clogged with symptoms of his
death.

The saddle-bow the noble parts had
pressed,

All bruised and mortified his manly breast.
Him still entranced, and in a litter laid,
They bore from field, and to his bed con-
veyed. 1990

At length he waked, and with a feeble cry,
The word he first pronounced was Emily

Mean time the king, though inwardly he mourned,
 In pomp triumphant to the town returned,
 Attended by the chiefs, who fought the field;
 (Now friendly mixed, and in one troop compelled):
 Composed his looks to counterfeited cheer,
 And bade them not for Arcite's life to fear.
 But that which gladdened all the warrior train,
 Though most were sorely wounded, none were slain. 2000
 The surgeons soon despoiled 'em of their arms,
 And some with salves they cure, and some with charms;
 Foment the bruises, and the pains assuage,
 And heal their inward hurts with sovereign draughts of sage.
 The king in person visits all around,
 Comforts the sick, congratulates the sound;
 Honours the princely chiefs, rewards the rest,
 And holds for thrice three days a royal feast.
 None was disgraced; for falling is no shame;
 And cowardice alone is loss of fame. 2010
 The vent'rous knight is from his saddle thrown,
 But 'tis the fault of fortune, not his own;
 If crowds and palms the conquering side adorn,
 The victor under better stars was born:
 The brave man seeks not popular applause,
 Nor overpowered with arms deserts his cause;
 Unshamed though foiled, he does the best he can;
 Force is of brutes, but honour is of man.
 Thus Theseus smiled on all with equal grace, 2020
 And each was set according to his place;
 With ease were reconciled the differing parts,
 For envy never dwells in noble hearts.

At length they took their leave, the time expired;
 Well pleased, and to their several homes retired.
 Meanwhile the health of Arcite still impairs;
 From bad proceeds to worse, and mocks the leeches' cares;
 Swollen is his breast; his inward pains increase,
 All means are used, and all without success.
 The clotted blood lies heavy on his heart,
 Corrupts, and there remains in spite of art: 2030
 Nor breathing veins, nor cupping will prevail;
 All outward remedies and inward fail:
 The mould of nature's fabric is destroyed,
 Her vessels discomposed, her virtue void:
 The bellows of his lungs begin to swell:
 All out of frame is every secret cell,
 Nor can the good receive, nor bad expel.
 Those breathing organs, thus within oppressed,
 With venom soon distend the sinews of his breast.
 Nought profits him to save abandoned life, 2040
 Nor vomit's upward aid, nor downward laxative.
 The midmost region battered and destroyed,
 When nature cannot work, the effect of art is void,
 For physic can but mend our crazy state,
 Patch an old building, not a new create.
 Arcite is doomed to die in all his pride,
 Must leave his youth, and yield his beautiful bride,
 Gained hardly, against right, and unenjoyed.
 When 'twas declared all hope of life was past,
 Conscience (that of all physic works the last) 2050
 Caused him to send for Emily in haste,
 With her, at his desire, came Palamon;
 Then on his pillow raised, he thus begun.
 "No language can express the smallest part
 Of what I feel, and suffer in my heart,

For you, whom best I love and value most ;
But to your service I bequeath my ghost ;
Which from this mortal body when untied,
Unseen, unheard, shall hover at your side ;
Nor fright you waking, nor your sleep
offend, 2060

But wait officious, and your steps attend :
How I have loved, excuse my faltering
tongue,

My spirit's feeble, and my pains are strong :
This I may say, I only grieve to die,
Because I lose my charming Emily :
To die, when Heaven had put you in my
power,

Fate could not choose a more malicious
hour !

What greater curse could envious Fortune
give,

Than just to die when I began to live !

Vain men, how vanishing a bliss we
crave, 2070

Now warm in love, now withering in the
grave !

Never, oh, never more to see the sun !

Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone !
This fate is common ; but I lose my breath
Near bliss, and yet not blessed before my
death.

Farewell ; but take me dying in your arms,
'Tis all I can enjoy of all your charms :

This hand I cannot but in death resign ;

Ah ! could I live ! but while I live 'tis
mine.

I feel my end approach, and thus em-
braced, 2080

Am pleased to die ; but hear me speak my
last :

Ah ! my sweet foe, for you, and you alone,
I broke my faith with injured Palamon.

But love the sense of right and wrong con-
founds,

Strong love and proud ambition have no
bounds.

And much I doubt, should Heaven my life
prolong,

I should return to justify my wrong :

For while my former flames remain within,
Repentance is but want of power to sin.

With mortal hatred I pursued his life, 2090
Nor he, nor you, were guilty of the strife ;
Nor I, but as I loved ; yet all combined,
Your beauty, and my impotence of mind ;
And his concurrent flame, that blew my
fire ;

For still our kindred souls had one desire.
He had a moment's right in point of time ;
Had I seen first, then his had been the
crime.

Fate made it mine, and justified his right ;
Nor holds this earth a more deserving
knight,

For virtue, valour, and for noble blood, 2100
Truth, honour, all that is comprised in
good :

So help me Heaven, in all the world is
none

So worthy to be loved as Palamon.

He loves you too, with such an holy fire,
As will not, cannot, but with life expire :
Our vowed affections both have often tried,
Nor any love but yours could ours divide.

Then, by my love's inviolable band,
By my long suffering, and my short com-
mand,

If e'er you plight your vows when I am
gone, 2110

Have pity on the faithful Palamon."

This was his last ; for Death came on
amain,

And exercised below his iron reign ;

Then upward to the seat of life he goes :

Sense fled before him, what he touched he
froze :

Yet could he not his closing eyes with-
draw,

Though less and less of Emily he saw ;

So, speechless for a little space he lay ;

Then grasped the hand he held, and sighed
his soul away.

But whither went his soul, let such
relate 2120

Who search the secrets of the future state :
Divines can say but what themselves be-
lieve ;

Strong proofs they have, but not demon-
strative :

For, were all plain, then all sides must agree,

And faith itself be lost in certainty.

To live uprightly then is sure the best,

To save ourselves, and not to damn the rest.

The soul of Arcite went where heathens go,
Who better live than we, though less they know.

In Palamon a manly grief appears ; 2130
Silent, he wept, ashamed to show his tears :
Emilia shrieked but once, and then, oppressed

With sorrow, sunk upon her lover's breast :
Till Theseus in his arms conveyed with care,
Far from so sad a sight, the swooning fair.

'Twere loss of time her sorrow to relate ;

Ill bears the sex a youthful lover's fate,

When just approaching to the nuptial state.

But, like a low-hung cloud, it rains so fast,
That all at once it falls, and cannot last. 2140

The face of things is changed, and Athens now,

That laughed so late, becomes the scene of woe :

Matrons and maids, both sexes, every state,
With tears lament the knight's untimely fate.

Nor greater grief in falling Troy was seen
For Hector's death ; but Hector was not then.

Old men with dust deformed their hoary hair,

The women beat their breasts, their cheeks they tare.

" Why wouldst thou go," with one consent they cry,

" When thou hadst gold enough, and Emily ?" 2150

Theseus himself, who should have cheered the grief

Of others, wanted now the same relief ;

Old Egeus only could revive his son,

Who various changes of the world had known,

And strange vicissitudes of human fate,
Still altering, never in a steady state ;

Good after ill, and, after pain, delight ;

Alternate like the scenes of day and night :

Since every man, who lives, is born to die,

And none can boast sincere felicity, 2160

With equal mind, what happens, let us bear,

Nor joy, nor grieve, too much for things beyond our care.

Like pilgrims to the appointed place we tend ;

The world's an inn, and death the journey's end.

Even kings but play ; and when their part is done,

Some other, worse or better, mounts the throne.

With words like these the crowd was satisfied,

And so they would have been, had Theseus died.

But he, their king, was labouring in his mind,

A fitting place for funeral pomps to find, 2170

Which were in honour of the dead designed.

And after long debate, at last he found
(As love itself had marked the spot of ground)

That grove for ever green, that conscious land,

Where he with Palamon fought hand to hand :

That where he fed his amorous desires

With soft complaints, and felt his hottest fires,

There other flames might waste his earthly part,

And burn his limbs, where love had burned his heart.

This once resolved, the peasants were enjoined 2180

Sere-wood, and firs, and doddered oaks to find.

With sounding axes to the grove they go,

Fell, split, and lay the fuel on a row,

Vulcanian food : a bier is next prepared,

On which the lifeless body should be reared,

Covered with cloth of gold, on which was laid
The corpse of Arcite in like robes arrayed.
White gloves were on his hands, and on his
head

A wreath of laurel, mixed with myrtle,
spread.

A sword keen-edged within his right he
held, 2190

The warlike emblem of the conquered field:
Bare was his manly visage on the bier :

Menaced his countenance ; even in death
severe.

Then to the palace-hall they bore the knight,
To lie in solemn state, a public sight,

Groans, cries, and howlings fill the crowded
place,

And unaffected sorrow sat on every face.

Sad Palamon above the rest appears,

In sable garments, dewed with gushing
tears :

His auburn locks on either shoulder
flowed, 2200

Which to the funeral of his friend he vowed :

But Emily, as chief, was next his side,

A virgin-widow, and a mourning bride.

And that the princely obsequies might be

Performed according to his high degree,

The steed, that bore him living to the fight,

Was trapped with polished steel, all shin-
ing bright,

And covered with the achievements of the
knight.

The riders rode abreast, and one his
shield,

His lance of cornel-wood another held ; 2210

The third his bow, and, glorious to behold,

The costly quiver, all of burnished gold.

The noblest of the Grecians next appear,

And, weeping, on their shoulders bore the
bier ;

With sober pace they marched, and often
stayed,

And through the master-street the corpse
conveyed.

The houses to their tops with black were
spread,

And even the pavements were with mourn-
ing hid.

The right side of the pall old Egeus kept,
And on the left the royal Theseus wept ; 2220
Each bore a golden bowl, of work divine,
With honey filled, and milk, and mixed
with ruddy wine.

Then Palamon, the kinsman of the slain,
And after him appeared the illustrious
train.

To grace the pomp, came Emily the bright,
With covered fire, the funeral pile to light.

With high devotion was the service made,

And all the rites of pagan honour paid :

So lofty was the pile, a Parthian bow,

With vigour drawn, must send the shaft
below. 2230

The bottom was full twenty fathom broad,
With crackling straw beneath in due pro-
portion strowed.

The fabric seemed a wood of rising green,

With sulphur and bitumen cast between,

To feed the flames : the trees were unctuous
fir,

And mountain-ash, the mother of the spear ;

The mourner yew, and buidler oak were
there :

The beech, the swimming alder, and the
plane,

Hard box, and linden of a softer grain,

And laurels, which the gods for conquering
chiefs ordain. 2240

How they were ranked, shall rest untold by
me,

With nameless Nymphs that lived in every
tree ;

Nor how the Dryads, or the woodland
train,

Disherited, ran howling o'er the plain :

Nor how the birds to foreign seats re-
paired,

Or beasts, that bolted out, and saw the
forest bared :

Nor how the ground, now cleared, with
ghastly fright

Beheld the sudden sun, a stranger to the
light.

The straw, as first I said, was laid below :
Of chips and sere-wood was the second
row ; 2250

The third of greens, and timber newly
felled ;
The fourth high stage the fragrant odours
held,
And pearls, and precious stones, and rich
array,
In midst of which, embalmed, the body
lay.
The service sung, the maid with mourning
eyes
The stubble fired ; the smouldering flames
arise :
This office done, she sunk upon the ground ;
But what she spoke, recovered from her
swoond,
I want the wit in moving words to dress ;
But by themselves the tender sex may
guess. 2360
While the devouring fire was burning fast,
Rich jewels in the flame the wealthy cast ;
And some their shields, and some their
lances threw,
And gave their warrior's ghost a warrior's
due.
Full bowls of wine, of honey, milk, and
blood,
Were poured upon the pile of burning wood,
And hissing flames receive, and hungry lick
the food.
Then thrice the mounted squadrons ride
around
The fire, and Arcite's name they thrice re-
sound :
" Hail and farewell ! " they shouted thrice
again, 2370
Thrice facing to the left, and thrice they
turned again :
Still as they turned, they beat their clatter-
ing shields ;
The women mix their cries ; and clamour
fills the fields.
The warlike wakes continued all the night,
And funeral games were played at new re-
turning light ;
Who naked wrestled best, besmeared with
oil,
Or who with gauntlets gave or took the
foil,

I will not tell you, nor would you attend ;
But briefly haste to my long story's end.
I pass the rest ; the year was fully
mourned, 2380
And Palamon long since to Thebes re-
turned :
When by the Grecians' general consent,
At Athens Theseus held his parliament :
Among the laws that passed, it was de-
creed,
That conquered Thebes from bondage
should be freed ;
Reserving homage to the Athenian throne,
To which the sovereign summoned Pala-
mon.
Unknowning of the cause, he took his way,
Mournful in mind, and still in black array.
The monarch mounts the throne, and,
placed on high, 2390
Commands into the court the beauteous
Emily :
So called, she came ; the senate rose, and
paid
Becoming reverence to the royal maid.
And first, soft whispers through the
assembly went :
With silent wonder then they watched the
event :
All hushed, the king arose with awful
grace,
Deep thought was in his breast, and
counsel in his face.
At length he sighed ; and having first
prepared
The attentive audience, thus his will de-
clared.
" The Cause and Spring of motion, from
above, 2390
Hung down on earth the golden chain of
Love :
Great was the effect, and high was his in-
tent,
When peace among the jarring seeds he
sent.
Fire, flood, and earth, and air by this were
bound,
And Love, the common link, the new
creation crowned.

The chain still holds ; for though the forms decay,

Eternal matter never wears away :

The same first Mover certain bounds has placed,

How long those perishable forms shall last :

Nor can they last beyond the time assigned 2810

By that all-seeing, and all-making Mind :
Shorten their hours they may ; for will is free ;

But never pass the appointed destiny.

So men oppressed, when weary of their breath,

Throw off the burden, and suborn their death.

Then since those forms begin, and have their end,

On some unaltered cause they sure depend :
Parts of the whole are we ; but God the whole :

Who gives us life, and animating soul.

For Nature cannot from a part derive 2820

That being, which the whole can only give :

He perfect, stable ; but imperfect we,

Subject to change, and different in degree ;

Plants, beasts, and man ; and, as our organs are,

We more or less of His perfection share.

But by a long descent, the ethereal fire

Corrupts ; and forms, the mortal part, expire :

As He withdraws his virtue, so they pass,

And the same matter makes another mass :

This law the Omniscient Power was pleased to give, 2830

That every kind should by succession live :

That individuals die, His will ordains ;

The propagated species still remains.

The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,

Shoots rising up, and spreads by slow degrees ;

Three centuries he grows, and three he stays,

Supreme in state, and in three more decays ;

So wears the paving pebble in the street,
And towns and towers their fatal periods meet :

So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie, 2840
Forsaken of their springs ; and leave their channels dry.

So Man, at first a drop, dilates with heat,
Then, formed, the little heart begins to beat ;

Secret he feeds, unknowing in the cell ;
At length, for hatching ripe, he breaks the shell,

And struggles into breath, and cries for aid ;
Then, helpless, in his mother's lap is laid.

He creeps, he walks, and issuing into man,
Grudges their life, from whence his own began :

Retichless of laws, affects to rule alone, 2850

Anxious to reign, and restless on the throne :

First vegetive, then feels, and reasons last ;
Rich of three souls, and lives all three to waste.

Some thus ; but thousands more in flower of age.

For few arrive to run the latter stage.

Sunk in the first, in battle some are slain,
And others whelmed beneath the stormy main.

What makes all this, but Jupiter the king,
At whose command we perish, and we spring ?

'Then 'tis our best, since thus ordained to die, 2860

To make a virtue of necessity ;

Take what he gives, since to rebel is vain ;

The bad grows better, which we well sustain ;

And could we choose the time, and choose aright,

'Tis best to die, our honour at the height.

When we have done our ancestors no shame,

But served our friends, and well secured our fame ;

Then should we wish our happy life to close,

And leave no more for fortune to dispose :

So should we make our death a glad
relief 2370

From future shame, from sickness, and
from grief :

Enjoying while we live the present hour,
And dying in our excellence and flower.
Then round our death-bed every friend
should run,

All joyous of our conquest early won :
While the malicious world with envious
tears

Should grudge our happy end, and wish it
theirs.

Since then our Arcite is with honour dead,
Why should we mourn, that he so soon is
freed,

Or call untimely, what the gods de-
creed ? 2380

With grief as just, a friend may be de-
plored,

From a foul prison to free air restored.
Ought he to thank his kinsman or his wife,
Could tears recall him into wretched life?
Their sorrow hurts themselves ; on him is
lost ;

And worse than both, offends his happy
ghost.

What then remains, but, after past annoy,
To take the good vicissitude of joy ?
To thank the gracious gods for what they
give,

Possess our souls, and while we live, to
live ? 2390

Ordain we then two sorrows to combine,
And in one point the extremes of grief to
join ;

That thence resulting joy may be renewed,
As jarring notes in harmony conclude.
Then I propose that Palamon shall be
In marriage joined with beauteous Emily ;
For which already I have gained the assent
Of my free people in full parliament.

Long love to her has borne the faithful
knight, 2400

And well deserved, had Fortune done him
right :

'Tis time to mend her fault ; since Emily
By Arcite's death from former vows is
free :

If you, fair sister, ratify the accord,
And take him for your husband, and your
lord,

'Tis no dishonour to confer your grace
On one descended from a royal race :
And were he less, yet years of service
past

From grateful souls exact reward at last ;
Pity is Heaven's and yours ; nor can she
find

A throne so soft as in a woman's
mind." 2410

He said ; she blushed ; and as o'erawed by
might,
Seemed to give Theseus what she gave the
knight.

Then turning to the Theban thus he said :
" Small arguments are needful to persuade
Your temper to comply with my com-
mand."

And speaking thus, he gave Emilia's hand.
Smiled Venus, to behold her own true
knight

Obtain the conquest, though he lost the
fight ;

And blessed with nuptial bliss the sweet
laborious night.

Eros, and Anteros, on either side, 2420
One fired the bridegroom, and one warmed
the bride ;

And long-attending Hymen, from above,
Showered on the bed the whole Italian
grove.

All of a tenor was their after-life,
No day discoloured with domestic strife ;
No jealousy, but mutual truth believed,
Secure repose, and kindness undeceived.
Thus Heaven, beyond the compass of his
thought,

Sent him the blessing he so dearly bought.
So may the Queen of Love long duty
bless, 2430

And all true lovers find the same success.

THE COCK AND THE FOX;

OR, THE TALE OF THE NUN'S PRIEST.

THERE lived, as authors tell, in days of
yore,
A widow somewhat old, and very poor :
Deep in a cell her cottage lonely stood,
Well thatched, and under covert of a
wood.
This dowager, on whom my tale I found,
Since last she laid her husband in the
ground,
A simple sober life, in patience, led,
And had but just enough to buy her
bread ;
But huswifery the little Heaven had lent,
She duly paid a groat for quarter-rent ; 10
And pinched her belly, with her daughters
two,
To bring the year about with much ado.
The cattle in her homestead were three
sows,
An ewe called Mally, and three brindled
cows.
Her parlour-window stuck with herbs
around,
Of savoury smell ; and rushes strewed the
ground.
A maple-dresser in her hall she had,
On which full many a slender meal she
made ;
For no delicious morsel passed her throat ;
According to her cloth she cut her coat : 20
No poignant sauce she knew, nor costly
treat,
Her hunger gave a relish to her meat :
A sparing diet did her health assure ;
Or sick, a pepper posset was her cure.
Before the day was done, her work she
sped,
And never went by candle-light to bed :
With exercise she sweat ill humours out,
Her dancing was not hindered by the gout.
Her poverty was glad ; her heart content,
Nor knew she what the spleen or vapours
meant. 30
Of wine she never tasted through the
year,
But white and black was all her homely
cheer :
Brown bread, and milk (but first she
skimmed her bowls),
And rashers of singed bacon on the coals.
On holy days an egg, or two at most ;
But her ambition never reached to roast.
A yard she had with pales enclosed
about,
Some high, some low, and a dry ditch
without.
Within this homestead lived, without a
peer,
For crowing loud, the noble Chanticleer ; 40
So high her cock, whose singing did sur-
pass
The merry notes of organs at the mass.
More certain was the crowing of the cock
To number hours, than is an abbey-clock ;
And sooner than the matin-bell was rung,
He clapped his wings upon his roost, and
sung :
For when degrees fifteen ascended right,
By sure instinct he knew 'twas one at
night.
High was his comb, and coral-red withal,
In dents embattled like a castle wall ; 50
His bill was raven-black, and shone like
jet ;
Blue were his legs, and orient were his
feet :
White were his nails, like silver to behold,
His body glittering like the burnished gold.
This gentle cock, for solace of his life,
Six misses had, besides his lawful wife ;

Scandal, that spares no king, though ne'er
so good,
Says, they were all of his own flesh and blood,
His sisters both by sire and mother's side;
And sure their likeness showed them near
allied. 60

But make the worst, the monarch did no
more,

Than all the Ptolemys had done before:
When incest is for interest of a nation,
'Tis made no sin by holy dispensation.
Some lines have been maintained by this
alone,
Which by their common ugliness are
known.

But passing this as from our tale apart,
Dame Partlet was the sovereign of his heart:
Ardent in love, outrageous in his play,
He feathered her a hundred times a
day: 70

And she, that was not only passing fair,
But was withal discreet, and debonaire,
Resolved the passive doctrine to fulfil,
Though loth; and let him work his wicked
will:

At board and bed was affable and kind,
According as their marriage-vow did bind,
And as the Church's precept had enjoined.
Even since she was a se'nnight old, they
say,

Was chaste and humble to her dying day,
Nor chick nor hen was known to dis-
obey. 80

By this her husband's heart she did
obtain;

What cannot beauty, joined with virtue,
gain!

She was his only joy, and he her pride;
She, when he walked, went pecking by his
side;

If, spurning up the ground, he sprung a
corn,

The tribute in his bill to her was borne.
But oh! what joy it was to hear him sing
In summer, when the day began to spring,
Stretching his neck, and warbling in his
throat,

Solus cum sola then was all his note. 90

For in the days of yore, the birds of parts
Were bred to speak, and sing, and learn
the liberal arts.

It happed that perching on the par' :
beam our

Amidst his wives, he had a deadly drear
Just at the dawn; and sighed, and groan
so fast,

As every breath he drew would be his last.
Dame Partlet, ever nearest to his side,
Heard all his piteous moan, and how he
cried

For help from gods and men; and sore
aghast

She pecked and pulled, and wakened him
at last. 100

"Dear heart," said she, "for love of Heaven
declare

Your pain, and make me partner of your
care.

You groan, Sir, ever since the morning-
light,

As something had disturbed your noble
spright."

"And, Madam, well I might," said Chan-
ticleer,

"Never was Shrove-tide cock in such a fear.
Even still I run all over in a sweat,

My princely senses not recovered yet,
For such a dream I had of dire portent,

That much I fear my body will be shent: 110
It bodes I shall have wars and woful strife,

Or in a loathsome dungeon end my life.
Know, dame, I dreamt within my troubled
breast,

That in our yard I saw a murderous beast,
That on my body would have made arrest.

With waking eyes I ne'er beheld his
fellow;

His colour was betwixt a red and yellow:
Tipped was his tail, and both his pricking
ears,

With black; and much unlike his other
hairs:

The rest, in shape a beagle's whelp through-
out, 120

With broader forehead, and a sharper
snout:

Deep in his front were sunk his glowing
eyes,

That yet methinks I see him with surprise.

Reach out your hand, I drop with clammy
sweat,

And lay it to my heart, and feel it beat."

"Now fie for shame," quoth she, "by
Heaven above,

Thou hast for ever lost thy lady's love ;

No woman can endure a recreant knight,

He must be bold by day, and free by
night :

Our sex desires a husband or a friend, ¹³⁰

Who can our honour and his own defend ;

Wise, hardy, secret, liberal of his purse :

A fool is nauseous, but a coward worse :

No bragging coxcomb, yet no baffled
knight.

How darest thou talk of love, and darest
not fight ?

How darest thou tell thy dame thou art
affaired ?

Hast thou no manly heart, and hast a
beard ?

"If aught from fearful dreams may be
divined,

They signify a cock of dunghill kind.

All dreams, as in old Galen I have
read, ¹⁴⁰

Are from repletion and complexion bred ;

From rising fumes of indigested food,

And noxious humours that infect the
blood :

And sure, my lord, if I can read aright,

These foolish fancies you have had to-
night,

Are certain symptoms (in the canting style)

Of boiling choler, and abounding bile ;

This yellow gall that in your stomach
floats,

Engenders all these visionary thoughts.

When choler overflows, then dreams are
bred ¹⁵⁰

Of flames, and all the family of red ;

Red dragons, and red beasts, in sleep we
view,

For humours are distinguished by their
hue,

From hence we dream of wars and warlike
things,

And wasps and hornets with their double
wings.

"Choler adust congeals our blood with
fear,

Then black bulls toss us, and black devils
tear.

In sanguine airy dreams aloft we bound,

With rheums oppressed, we sink in rivers
drowned.

"More I could say, but thus conclude my
theme, ¹⁶⁰

The dominating humour makes the dream.

Cato was in his time accounted wise,

And he condemns them all for empty lies.

Take my advice, and when we fly to
ground

With laxatives preserve your body sound,

And purge the peccant humours that
abound.

I should be loth to lay you on a bier ;

And though there lives no 'pothecary near,

I dare for once prescribe for your disease,

And save long bills, and a damned doctor's
fees. ¹⁷⁰

"Two sovereign herbs, which I by
practice know,

And both at hand (for in our yard they
grow)

On peril of my soul shall rid you wholly

Of yellow choler, and of melancholy :

You must both purge and vomit ; but obey,

And for the love of Heaven make no delay.

Since hot and dry in your complexion join,

Beware the sun when in a vernal sign ;

For when he mounts exalted in the Ram,

If then he finds your body in a flame, ¹⁸⁰

Replete with choler, I dare lay a groat,

A tertian ague is at least your lot.

Perhaps a fever (which the gods forbend)

May bring your youth to some untimely
end :

And therefore, Sir, as you desire to live,

A day or two before your laxative,

Take just three worms, nor under nor
above,

Because the gods unequal numbers love.

These digestives prepare you for your purge;
Of fumatory, centaury, and spurge, 190
And of ground-ivy add a leaf or two,
All which within our yard or garden grow.
Eat these, and be, my lord, of better cheer :
Your father's son was never born to fear."

"Madam," quoth he, "gramercy for your care,

But Cato, whom you quoted, you may spare :

'Tis true, a wise and worthy man he seems,
And (as you say) gave no belief to dreams .
But other men of more authority,
And, by the immortal powers, as wise
as he, 200

Maintain, with sounder sense, that dreams forebode ;

For Homer plainly says they come from God.

Nor Cato said it : but some modern fool
Imposed in Cato's name on boys at school.

"Believe me, Madam, morning dreams foreshow

The events of things, and future weal or woe :

Some truths are not by reason to be tried,
But we have sure experience for our guide.
An ancient author, equal with the best,
Relates this tale of dreams among the
rest. 210

"Two friends or brothers, with devout intent,

On some far pilgrimage together went.
It happened so that, when the sun was down,

They just arrived by twilight at a town :
That day had been the baiting of a bull,
'Twas at a feast, and every inn so full,
That no void room in chamber, or on
ground,

And but one sorry bed was to be found ;
And that so little it would hold but one,
Though till this hour they never lay
alone. 220

"So were they forced to part ; one stayed behind,

His fellow sought what lodging he could find ;

At last he found a stall where oxen stood,
And that he rather chose than lie abroad.
'Twas in a farther yard without a door ;
But, for his ease, well littered was the floor.

"His fellow, who the narrow bed had kept,
Was weary, and without a rocker slept ;
Supine he snored ; but, in the dead of night,
He dreamt his friend appeared before his
sight, 230

Who with a ghastly look and doleful cry,
Said, 'Help me, brother, or this night I die :

Arise, and help, before all help be vain,
Or in an ox's stall I shall be slain.

"Roused from his rest he wakened in a start,

Shivering with horror, and with aching heart ;

At length to cure himself by reason tries ;
'Tis but a dream, and what are dreams
but lies ?

So thinking changed his side, and closed his eyes.

His dream returns ; his friend appears again : 240

'The murderers come, now help, or I am slain :'

'Twas but a vision still, and visions are but vain.

He dreamt the third ; but now his friend appeared

Pale, naked, pierced with wounds, with blood besmeared :

'Thrice warned, awake,' said he ; 'relief is late,

The deed is done ; but thou revenge my fate :

Tardy of aid, unseal thy heavy eyes,
Awake, and with the dawning day arise :
Take to the western gate thy ready way,
For by that passage they my corpse convey : 250

My corpse is in a tumbrel laid, among
The filth and ordure, and enclosed with dung.

That cart arrest, and raise a common cry ;
For sacred hunger of my gold I die.'

Then showed his grisly wounds : and last
he drew

A piteous sigh ; and took a long adieu.

"The frighted friend arose by break of
day,

And found the stall where late his fellow
lay.

Then of his impious host inquiring more,
Was answered that his guest was gone
before : 280

'Muttering he went,' said he, 'by morning
light,

And much complained of his ill rest by
night.'

This raised suspicion in the pilgrim's mind ;
Because all hosts are of an evil kind,

And oft to share the spoil with robbers
joined.

"His dream confirmed his thought ; with
troubled look

Straight to the western gate his way he
took ;

There, as his dream foretold, a cart he
found,

That carried compost forth to dung the
ground.

This when the pilgrim saw, he stretched
his throat, 270

And cried out 'Murder !' with a yelling
note.

'My murdered fellow in this cart lies dead,
Vengeance and justice on the villain's
head ;

You, magistrates, who sacred laws dispense,
On you I call to punish this offence.'

"The word thus given ; within a little
space,

The mob came roaring out, and thronged
the place.

All in a trice they cast the cart to gro. nd,
And in the dung the murdered body found ;

Though breathless, warm, and reeking from
the wound. 280

Good Heaven, whose darling attribute we
find

Is boundless grace, and mercy to mankind,
Abhors the cruel ; and the deeds of night
By wondrous ways reveals in open light :

Murder may pass unpunished for a time,
But tardy justice will o'ertake the crime.

And oft a speedier pain the guilty feels,
The hue and cry of Heaven pursues him
at the heels,

Fresh from the fact ; as in the present case,
The criminals are seized upon the place : 290
Carter and host confronted face to face.

Stiff in denial, as the law appoints,
On engines they distend their tortured
joints :

So was confession forced, the offence was
known,

And public justice on the offenders done.

"Here may you see that visions are to
dread ;

And in the page that follows this, I read
Of two young merchants, whom the hope
of gain

Induced in partnership to cross the main :
Waiting till willing winds their sails sup-
plied, 300

Within a trading-town they long abide,
Full fairly situate on a haven's side.

"One evening it befel, that looking out,
The wind they long had wished was come
about :

Well pleased they went to rest ; and if the
gale

Till morn continued, both resolved to sail.

But as together in a bed they lay,

The younger had a dream at break of day.
A man he thought stood frowning at his
side,

Who warned him for his safety to pro-
vide, 310

Nor put to sea, but safe on shore abide.

'I come, thy genius, to command thy
stay ;

Trust not the winds, for fatal is the day,
And death unhopd attends the watery way.'

"The vision said, and vanished from his
sight :

The dreamer wakened in a mortal fright ;
Then pulled his drowsy neighbour, and
declared

What in his slumber he had seen and
heard.

His friend smiled scornful, and with proud
contempt

Rejects as idle what his fellow dreamt. 320

'Stay, who will stay: for me no fears
restrain,

Who follow Mercury the god of gain;

Let each man do as to his fancy seems,

I wait, not I, till you have better dreams.

Dreams are but interludes which fancy
makes;

When monarch reason sleeps, this mimic
wakes:

Compounds a medley of disjointed things,

A mob of cobblers, and a court of kings:

Light fumes are merry, grosser fumes are
sad:

Both are the reasonable soul run mad: 330

And many monstrous forms in sleep we see,

That neither were nor are, nor e'er can be,

Sometimes forgotten things long cast
behind

Rush forward in the brain, and come to
mind.

The nurse's legends are for truths received,
And the man dreams but what the boy
believed.

" Sometimes we but rehearse a former
play,

The night restores our actions done by
day;

As hounds in sleep will open for their prey.

In short, the farce of dreams is of a
piece, 340

Chimeras all; and more absurd, or less:

You, who believe in tales, abide alone;

Whate'er I get this voyage is my own.'

" Thus while he spoke, he heard the
shouting crew

That called aboard, and took his last
adieu.

The vessel went before a merry gale,

And for quick passage put on every sail:

But when least feared, and even in open
day,

The mischief overtook her in the way:

Whether she sprung a leak, I cannot
find, 350

Or whether she was overset with wind,

Or that some rock below her bottom rent;
But down at once with all her crew she
went:

Her fellow-ships from far her loss descried;

But only she was sunk, and all were safe
beside.

" By this example you are taught again,

That dreams and visions are not always
vain:

But if, dear Partlet, you are still in doubt,

Another tale shall make the former out.

" Kenelm, the son of Kenulph, Mercia's
king, 360

Whose holy life the legends loudly sing,

Warned in a dream, his murder did fore-
tell

From point to point as after it befel:

All circumstances to his nurse he told,

(A wonder from a child of seven years old:)

The dream with horror heard, the good
old wife

From treason counselled him to guard his
life;

But close to keep the secret in his mind,

For a boy's vision small belief would find.

The pious child, by promise bound,
obeyed, 370

Nor was the fatal murder long delayed:

By Quenda slain, he fell before his time,

Made a young martyr by his sister's crime.

The tale is told by venerable Bede,

Which, at your better leisure, you may
read.

" Macrobius too relates the vision sent

To the great Scipio, with the famed event:

Objections makes, but after makes replies,

And adds, that dreams are often prophecies.

" Of Daniel you may read in holy
writ, 380

Who, when the king his vision did forget,

Could word for word the wondrous dream
repeat.

Nor less of patriarch Joseph understand,

Who by a dream enslaved the Egyptian
land,

The years of plenty and of dearth foretold

When, for their bread, their liberty they
sold.

Nor must the exalted butler be forgot,
Nor he whose dream presaged his hanging
lot.

"And did not Croesus the same death
foresee,

Raised in his vision on a lofty tree? 380

The wife of Hector, in his utmost pride,
Dreamt of his death the night before he
died ;

Well was he warned from battle to refrain,
But men to death decreed are warned in
vain :

He dared the dream, and by his fatal foe
was slain.

"Much more I know, which I forbear to
speak,

For see the ruddy day begins to break ;
Let this suffice, that plainly I foresee

My dream was bad, and bodes adversity :

But neither pills nor laxatives I like, 400

They only serve to make the well-man
sick :

Of these his gain the sharp physician
makes,

And often gives a purge, but seldom takes :

They not correct, but poison all the blood,

And ne'er did any but the doctors good.

Their tribe, trade, trinkets, I defy them all ;

With every work of 'Potheary's Hall.

These melancholy matters I forbear :

But let me tell thee, Partlet mine, and
swear,

That when I view the beauties of thy
face, 410

I fear not death, nor dangers, nor disgrace :

So may my soul have bliss, as when I spy

The scarlet red about thy partridge eye,

While thou art constant to thy own true
knight,

While thou art mine, and I am thy de-
light,

All sorrows at thy presence take their
flight.

For true it is, as *in principio*,

Mulier est hominis confusio.

Madam, the meaning of this Latin is,

That woman is to man his sovereign
bliss. 420

For when by night I feel your tender side,
Though for the narrow perch I cannot
ride,

Yet I have such a solace in my mind,
That all my boding cares are cast behind ;
And even already I forget my dream."

He said, and downward flew from off the
beam,

For daylight now began apace to spring,
The thrush to whistle, and the lark to sing.
Then crowing clapped his wings, the ap-
pointed call,

To chuck his wives together in the hall. 430

By this the widow had unbarred the
door,

And Chanticleer went strutting out before,
With royal courage, and with heart so
light,

As showed he scorned the visions of the
night.

Now roaming in the yard, he spurned the
ground,

And gave to Partlet the first grain he
found.

Then often feathered her with wanton play,
And trod her twenty times ere prime of
day :

And took by turns, and gave so much de-
light,

Her sisters pined with envy at the sight. 440

He chucked again, when other corns he
found,

And scarcely deigned to set a foot to
ground.

But swaggered like a lord about his hall,

And his seven wives came running at his
call.

'Twas now the month in which the world
began,

(If March beheld the first created man :)

And since the vernal equinox, the sun,

In Aries twelve degrees, or more, had run ;

When casting up his eyes against the
light,

Both month, and day, and hour he mea-
sured right ; 450

And told more truly than the Ephemeris ;
For art may err, but nature cannot miss.

Thus numbering times and seasons in
his breast,
His second crowing the third hour con-
fessed.
Then turning, said to Partlet, "See, my
dear,
How lavish nature has adorned the year ;
How the pale primrose and blue violet
spring,
And birds essay their throats disused to
sing :
All these are ours ; and I with pleasure see
Man strutting on two legs, and aping
me : 460
An unfledged creature, of a lumpish frame,
Endowed with fewer particles of flame ;
Our dame sits cowering o'er a kitchen
fire,
I draw fresh air, and Nature's works ad-
mire :
And even this day in more delight abound,
Than, since I was an egg, I ever found."
The time shall come when Chanticleer
shall wish
His words unsaid, and hate his boasted
bliss :
The crested bird shall by experience know,
Jove made not him his masterpiece be-
low ; 470
And learn the latter end of joy is woe.
The vessel of his bliss to dregs is run,
And Heaven will have him taste his other
tun.
Ye wise, draw near, and hearken to my
tale,
Which proves that oft the proud by flattery
fall :
The legend is as true I undertake
As Tristrani is, or Launcelot of the Lake :
Which all our ladies in such reverence
hold,
As if in Book of Martyrs it were told. 480
A fox full-fraught with seeming sanctity,
That feared an oath, but, like the devil,
would lie ;
Who looked like Lent, and had the holy
leer,
And durst not sin before he said his prayer ;

This pious cheat, that never sucked the
blood,
Nor chewed the flesh of lambs, but when
he could ;
Had passed three summers in the neigh-
bouring wood :
And musing long, whom next to circum-
vent,
On Chanticleer his wicked fancy bent :
And in his high imagination cast,
By stratagem to gratify his taste. 490
The plot contrived, before the break of
day,
Saint Reynard through the hedge had
made his way ;
The pale was next, but proudly with a
bound
He leapt the fence of the forbidden ground :
Yet fearing to be seen, within a bed
Of coleworts he concealed his wily head ;
Then skulked till afternoon, and watched
his time,
(As murderers use) to perpetrate his crime.
O hypocrite, ingenious to destroy,
O traitor, worse than Sinon was to Troy ! 500
O vile subverter of the Gallic reign,
More false than Gano was to Charlemagne !
O Chanticleer, in an unhappy hour
Didst thou forsake the safety of thy bower :
Better for thee thou hadst believed thy
dream,
And not that day descended from the beam !
But here the doctors eagerly dispute :
Some hold predestination absolute :
Some clerks maintain, that Heaven at first
foresees,
And in the virtue of foresight decrees. 510
If this be so, then prescience binds the will,
And mortals are not free to good or ill ;
For what He first foresaw, He must ordain,
Or its eternal prescience may be vain :
As bad for us as prescience had not been :
For, first or last, He's author of the sin.
And who says that, let the blaspheming man
Say worse even of the devil, if he can.
For how can that eternal Power be just
To punish man, who sins because he
must ? 520

Or how can He reward a virtuous deed,
Which is not done by us ; but first de-
creed?

I cannot bolt this matter to the bran,
As Bradwardin and holy Austin can ;
If prescience can determine actions so
That we must do, because He did fore-
know,

Or that foreknowing, yet our choice is free,
Not forced to sin by strict necessity :
This strict necessity they simple call,
Another sort there is conditional. 530
The first so binds the will, that things
foreknown

By spontaneity, not choice, are done.
Thus galley-slaves tug willing at their oar,
Content to work, in prospect of the shore ;
But would not work at all if not constrained
before.

That other does not liberty constrain,
But man may either act, or may refrain.
Heaven made us agents free to good or ill,
And forced it not, though He foresaw the
will.

Freedom was first bestowed on human
race, 540

And prescience only held the second place.

If He could make such agents wholly
free,

I not dispute ; the point's too high for me ;
For Heaven's unfathomed power what man
can sound,

Or put to His omnipotence a bound ?
He made us to His image, all agree ;
That image is the soul, and that must be,
Or not the Maker's image, or be free.
But whether it were better man had been,
By nature bound to good, not free to sin,
I waive, for fear of splitting on a rock. 550

The tale I tell is only of a Cock ;
Who had not run the hazard of his life,
Had he believed his dream, and not his
wife :

For women, with a mischief to their kind,
Pervert, with bad advice, our better mind.
A woman's counsel brought us first to
woe,

And made her man his paradise forego,

Where at heart's ease he lived ; and might
have been

As free from sorrow as he was from sin. 560
For what the devil had their sex to do,
That, born to folly, they presumed to know,
And could not see the serpent in the grass ?
But I myself presume, and let it pass.

Silence in times of suffering is the best,
'Tis dangerous to disturb an hornet's nest.
In other authors you may find enough,
But all they say of dames is idle stuff.
Legends of lying wits together bound,
The Wife of Bath would throw 'em to the
ground ; 570

These are the words of Chanticleer, not
mine ;

I honour dames, and think their sex divine.
Now to continue what my tale begun ;
Lay Madame Partlet basking in the sun,
Breast-high in sand : her sisters, in a row,
Enjoyed the beams above, the warmth be-
low.

The cock, that of his flesh was ever free,
Sung merrier than the mermaid in the sea :
And so befel, that as he cast his eye
Among the coleworts on a butterfly, 580
He saw false Reynard where he lay full low ;
I need not swear he had no list to crow :
But cried, " cock, cock," and gave a sudden
start,

As sore dismayed and frightened at his heart.
For birds and beasts, informed by Nature,
know

Kinds opposite to theirs, and fly their foe.
So Chanticleer, who never saw a fox,
Yet shunned him as a sailor shuns the
rocks.

But the false loon, who could not work
his will

By open force, employed his flattering
skill ; 590

" I hope, my lord," said he, " I not offend ;
Are you afraid of me, that am your friend ?
I were a beast indeed to do you wrong,
I, who have loved and honoured you so
long :

Stay, gentle Sir, nor take a false alarm,
For on my soul I never meant you harm.

I come no spy, nor as a traitor press,
To learn the secrets of your soft recess :
Ear be from Reynard so profane a thought,
But by the sweetness of your voice was
brought : 600

For, as I bid my beads, by chance I heard
The song as of an angel in the yard ;
A song that would have charmed the in-
fernal gods,
And banished horror from the dark
abodes :

Had Orpheus sung it in the nether sphere,
So much the hyman had pleased the tyrant's
ear,

The wife had been detained, to keep the
husband there.

" My lord, your sire familiarly I knew,
A peer deserving such a son as you :
He, with your lady-mother (whom Heaven
rest), 610

Has often graced my house, and been my
guest :

To view his living features does me good,
For I am your poor neighbour in the wood ;
And in my cottage should be proud to see
The worthy heir of my friend's family.

" But since I speak of singing, let me
say,

As with an upright heart I safely may,
That, save yourself, there breathes not on
the ground

One like your father for a silver sound.
So sweetly would he wake the winter-
day, 620

That matrons to the church mistook their
way,

And thought they heard the merry organ
play.

And he to raise his voice with artful care,
(What will not beaux attempt to please
the fair ?)

On tiptoe stood to sing with greater strength,
And stretched his comely neck at all the
length ;

And while he strained his voice to pierce
the skies,

As saints in raptures use, would shut his
eyes,

That the sound striving through the
narrow throat,

His winking might avail to mend the
note. 630

By this, in song, he never had his peer,
From sweet Cecilia down to Chanticleer ;
Not Maro's muse, who sung the mighty man,
Nor Pindar's heavenly lyre, nor Horace
when a swan.

Your ancestors proceed from race divine :
From Brennus and Belinus is your line ;
Who gave to sovereign Rome such loud
alarms,

That even the priests were not excused
from arms.

" Besides, a famous monk of modern
times

Has left of cocks recorded in his rhymes, 640
That of a parish priest the son and heir
(When sons of priests were from the proverb
clear),

Affronted once a cock of noble kind,
And either lamed his legs or struck him
blind ;

For which the clerk his father was dis-
graced,

And in his benefice another placed.

Now sing, my lord, if not for love of me,
Yet for the sake of sweet Saint Charity ;
Make hills, and dales, and earth, and
heaven rejoice,

And emulate your father's angel-voice." 650
The cock was pleased to hear him speak
so fair,

And proud beside, as solar people are ;
Nor could the treason from the truth
descry,

So was he ravished with this flattery :
So much the more, as from a little elf,
He had a high opinion of himself ;
Though sickly, slender, and not large of
limb,

Concluding all the world was made for him.

Ye princes, raised by poets to the gods,
And Alexandered up in lying odes, 660
Believe not every flattering knave's report,
There's many a Reynard lurking in the
court ;

And he shall be received with more regard,
And listened to, than modest truth is heard.

This Chanticleer, of whom the story
sings,
Stood high upon his toes, and clapped his
wings;

Then stretched his neck, and winked with
both his eyes,
Ambitious as he sought the Olympic prize.
But while he pained himself to raise his
note,

False Reynard rushed, and caught him by
the throat. 670

Then on his back he laid the precious load,
And sought his wonted shelter of the wood;
Swiftly he made his way, the mischief
done,

Of all unheeded, and pursued by none.

Alas! what stay is there in human state,
Or who can shun inevitable fate?

The doom was written, the decree was
passed,

Ere the foundations of the world were cast!
In Aries though the sun exalted stood,

His patron-planet to procure his good; 680

Yet Saturn was his mortal foe, and he,

In Libra raised, opposed the same degree:

The rays both good and bad, of equal
power,

Each thwarting other, made a mingled
hour.

On Friday morn he dreamt this direful
dream,

Cross to the worthy native, in his scheme!

Ah, blissful Venus, goddess of delight!

How couldst thou suffer thy devoted
knight

On thy own day to fall, by foe oppressed,
The wight of all the world who served thee
best?

Who, true to love, was all for recreation, 690
And minded not the work of propagation.

Gaufride, who couldst so well in rhyme
complain

The death of Richard * with an arrow slain,

Why had not I thy muse, or thou my
heart,

To sing this heavy dirge with equal art!
That I like thee on Friday might complain;
For on that day was Cœur de Lion slain.

Not louder cries, when Ilium was in flames,
Were sent to heaven by woful Trojan
dames, 700

When Pyrrhus tossed on high his burnished
blade,

And offered Priam to his father's shade,
Than for the cock the widowed poultry
made.

Fair Partlet first, when he was borne from
sight,

With sovereign shrieks bewailed her captive
knight:

Far louder than the Carthaginian wife,
When Asdrubal her husband lost his life,
When she beheld the smouldering flames
ascend,

And all the Punic glories at an end:
Willing into the fires she plunged her
head, 710

With greater ease than others seek their bed.
Not more aghast the matrons of renown,
When tyrant Nero burned the imperial
town,

Shrieked for the downfall in a doleful cry,
For which their guiltless lords were doomed
to die.

Now to my story I return again:
The trembling widow, and her daughters
twain,

This woful cackling cry with horror heard,
Of those distracted damsels in the yard:

And starting up, beheld the heavy sight, 720
How Reynard to the forest took his flight,
And cross his back, as in triumphant scorn,
The hope and pillar of the house was borne.

"The fox! the wicked fox!" was all the
cry;

Out from his house ran every neighbour
nigh:

The vicar first, and after him the crew,
With forks and staves the felon to pursue.
Ran Coll our dog, and Talbot with the band,
And Malkin, with her distaff in her hand:

* Richard I., shot when besieging Chaluz.
"Gaufride" was Geoffrey de Vinsauf, a troubadour.

Ran cow and calf, and family of hogs, 730
In panic horror of pursuing dogs;
With many a deadly grunt and doleful
squeak,

Poor swine, as if their pretty hearts would
break.

The shouts of men, the women in dismay,
With shrieks augment the terror of the day.
The ducks, that heard the proclamation
cried,

And feared a persecution might betide,
Full twenty mile from town their voyage
take,

Obscure in rushes of the liquid lake.

The geese fly o'er the barn; the bees in
arms 740

Drive headlong from their waxen cells in
swarms.

Jack Straw at London-stone, with all his
rout,

Struck not the city with so loud a shout;
Not when with English hate they did
pursue

A Frenchman, or an unbelieving Jew:
Not when the welkin rung with "One
and all!"

And echoes bounded back from Fox's hall:
Earth seemed to sink beneath, and heaven
above to fall.

With might and main they chased the
murderous fox, 750

With brazen trumpets, and inflated box,
To kindle Mars with military sounds,
Nor wanted horns to inspire sagacious
hounds.

But see how Fortune can confound the
wise,

And when they least expect it, turn the dice,
The captive cock, who scarce could draw
his breath,

And lay within the very jaws of death;
Yet in this agony his fancy wrought,
And fear supplied him with this happy
thought:

"Yours is the prize, victorious prince,"
said he,

"The vicar my defeat, and all the village
see. 760

Enjoy your friendly fortune while you may,
And bid the churls that envy you the prey
Call back their mongrel curs, and cease
their cry.

See, fools, the shelter of the wood is nigh,
And Chanticleer in your despite shall die,
He shall be plucked and eaten to the bone.'

" 'Tis well advised, in faith it shall be
done; "

This Reynard said: but as the word he
spoke,

The prisoner with a spring from prison
broke:

Then stretched his feathered fans with all
his might, 770

And to the neighbouring maple winged
his flight.

Whom when the traitor safe on tree be-
held,

He cursed the gods, with shame and sorrow
filled;

Shame for his folly, sorrow out of time,
For plotting an unprofitable crime;

Yet mastering both, the artificer of lies
Renews the assault, and his last battery
tries.

"Though I," said he, "did ne'er in
thought offend,

How justly may my lord suspect his friend?
The appearance is against me, I confess, 780

Who seemingly have put you in distress:
You, if your goodness does not plead my
cause,

May think I broke all hospitable laws,
To bear you from your palace-yard by
might,

And put your noble person in a fright:
This, since you take it ill, I must repent,
Though Heaven can witness, with no bad
intent

I practised it, to make you taste your
cheer

With double pleasure, first prepared by
fear.

So loyal subjects often seize their prince, 790
Forced (for his good) to seeming violence,
Yet mean his sacred person not the least
offence.

Descend ; so help me Jove, as you shall
find

That Reynard comes of no dissembling
kind."

"Nay," quoth the cock ; "but I beshrew
us both,

If I believe a saint upon his oath :

An honest man may take a knave's advice,
But idiots only may be cozened twice :

Once warned is well bewared ; no flattering
lies

Shall soothe me more to sing with winking
eyes 800

And open mouth, for fear of catching flies.

Who blindfold walks upon a river's brim,

When he should see, has he deserved to
swim ?"

"Better, sir Cock, let all contention cease ;
Come down," said Reynard, "let us
treat of peace."

"A peace with all my soul," said Chant-
cleer ;

"But, with your favour I will treat it here :

And lest the truce with treason should be
mixed,

'Tis my concern to have the tree betwixt."

THE MORAL.

In this plain fable you the effect may
see 810

Of negligence, and fond credulity :

And learn besides of flatterers to beware,

Then most pernicious when they speak too
fair.

The cock and fox, the fool and knave
imply ;

The truth is moral, though the tale a lie.

Who spoke in parables, I dare not say ;

But sure He knew it was a pleasing way,

Sound sense, by plain example, to convey.

And in a heathen author we may find,

That pleasure with instruction should be
joined ; 820

So take the corn, and leave the chaff
behind.

THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF ;

OR, THE LADY IN THE ARBOUR.

A VISION.

Now turning from the wintry signs, the sun
His course exalted through the Ram had
run,

And whirling up the skies, his chariot
drove

Through Taurus, and the lightsome realms
of love ;

Where Venus from her orb descends in
showers,

To glad the ground, and paint the fields
with flowers :

When first the tender blades of grass appear,
And buds, that yet the blast of Eurus fear,
Stand at the door of life, and doubt to
clothe the year :

Till gentle heat, and soft repeated rains, 10
Make the green blood to dance within
their veins :

Then, at their call, emboldened out they
come,

And swell the gems, and burst the narrow
room ;

Broader and broader yet, their blooms display,
Salute the welcome sun, and entertain the day.

Then from their breathing souls the sweets repair

To scent the skies, and purge the unwholesome air :

Joy spreads the heart, and, with a general song,

Spring issues out, and leads the jolly months along.

In that sweet season, as in bed I lay, 20
And sought in sleep to pass the night away,
I turned my weary side, but still in vain,
Though full of youthful health, and void of pain ;

Cares I had none, to keep me from my rest,
For Love had never entered in my breast ;
I wanted nothing Fortune could supply,
Nor did she slumber till that hour deny.

I wondered then, but after found it true,
Much joy had dried away the balmy dew :
Seas would be pools, without the brushing air, 30

To curl the waves ; and sure some little care

Should weary Nature so, to make her want repair.

When Chanticleer the second watch had sung,

Scorning the scorner sleep, from bed I sprung ;

And dressing, by the moon, in loose array,
Passed out in open air, preventing day,
And sought a goodly grove, as fancy led my way.

Straight as a line in beauteous order stood
Of oaks unshorn a venerable wood ;

Fresh was the grass beneath, and every tree 40

At distance planted in a due degree,
Their branching arms in air with equal space
Stretched to their neighbours with a long embrace :

And the new leaves on every bough were seen,

Some ruddy coloured, some of lighter green.

The painted birds, companions of the Spring,

Hopping from spray to spray, were heard to sing.

Both eyes and ears received a like delight,
Enchanting music, and a charming sight.

On Philomel I fixed my whole desire ; 50
And listened for the queen of all the quire ;
Fain would I hear her heavenly voice to sing ;

And wanted yet an omen to the Spring.
Attending long in vain, I took the way,
Which through a path, but scarcely printed, lay ;

In narrow mazes oft it seemed to meet,
And looked, as lightly pressed by fairy feet.

Wandering I walked alone, for still methought

To some strange end so strange a path was wrought :

At last it led me where an arbour stood, 60
The sacred receptacle of the wood :
This place unmarked, though oft I walked the green,

In all my progress I had never seen :
And seized at once with wonder and delight,

Gazed all around me, new to the transporting sight.

'Twas benched with turf, and goodly to be seen,

The thick young grass arose in fresher green :
The mound was newly made, no sight could pass

Betwixt the nice partitions of the grass ;
The well-united sods so closely lay ; 70
And all around the shades defended it from day

For sycamores with eglantine were spread,
A hedge about the sides, a covering over head.

And so the fragrant briar was wove between,

The sycamore and flowers were mixed with green,

That Nature seemed to vary the delight,
And satisfied at once the smell and sight.

The master workman of the bower was
known

Through fairy-lands, and built for Oberon ;
Who twining leaves with such proportion
drew, 80

They rose by measure, and by rule they
grew.

No mortal tongue can half the beauty tell :
For none but hands divine could work so
well.

Both roof and sides were like a parlour
made,

A soft recess, and a cool summer shade ;
The hedge was set so thick, no foreign eye
The persons placed within it could espy :

But all that passed without with ease was
seen,

As if nor fence nor tree was placed between.
'Twas bordered with a field ; and some
was plain 90

With grass, and some was sowed with
rising grain.

That (now the dew with spangles decked
the ground)

A sweeter spot of earth was never found.
I looked and looked, and still with new
delight ;

Such joy my soul, such pleasures filled my
sight :

And the fresh eglantine exhaled a breath,
Whose odours were of power to raise from
death.

Nor sullen discontent, nor anxious care,
Even though brought thither, could inhabit
there :

But thence they fled as from their mortal
foe ; 100

For this sweet place could only pleasure
know.

Thus as I mused, I cast aside my eye,
And saw a medlar-tree was planted nigh.
The spreading branches made a goodly
show,

And full of opening blooms was every
bough :

A goldfinch there I saw with gaudy pride
Of painted plumes, that hopped from side
to side,

Still pecking as she passed ; and still she
drew

The sweets from every flower, and sucked
the dew :

Sufficed at length, she warbled in her
throat, 110

And tuned her voice to many a merry
note,

But indistinct, and neither sweet nor clear,
Yet such as soothed my soul, and pleased
my ear.

Her short performance was no sooner
tried,

When she I sought—the nightingale—
replied :

So sweet, so shrill, so variously she sung,
That the grove echoed, and the valleys
rung :

And I so ravished with her heavenly note,
I stood entranced, and had no room for
thought,

But all o'erpowered with ecstasy of bliss, 120
Was in a pleasing dream of paradise ;

At length I waked, and looking round the
bower

Searched every tree, and pried on every
flower,

If anywhere by chance I might espy

The rural poet of the melody :

For still methought she sung not far away :

At last I found her on a laurel spray.

Close by my side she sat, and fair in
sight,

Full in a line, against her opposite ;

Where stood with eglantine the laurel
twined ; 130

And both their native sweets were well
conjoined.

On the green bank I sat, and listened long ;
(Sitting was more convenient for the song :)

Nor till her lay was ended could I move,

But wished to dwell for ever in the grove.

Only methought the time too swiftly
passed,

And every note I feared would be the last.

My sight, and smell, and hearing were em-
ployed,

And all three senses in full gust enjoyed.

And what alone did all the rest surpass, 140
The sweet possession of the fairy place ;
Single, and conscious to myself alone
Of pleasures to the excluded world un-
known ;

Pleasures which nowhere else were to be
found,

And all Elysium in a spot of ground.

Thus while I sat intent to see and hear,
And drew perfumes of more than vital air,
All suddenly I heard the approaching sound
Of vocal music on the enchanted ground :
An host of saints it seemed, so full the
quire ; 180

As if the blessed above did all conspire
To join their voices, and neglect the lyre.
At length there issued from the grove
behind

A fair assembly of the female kind :

A train less fair, as ancient fathers tell,

Seduced the sons of heaven to rebel.

I pass their form, and every charming
grace,

Less than an angel would their worth
debase :

But their attire, like liveries of a kind,
All rich and rare, is fresh within my
mind. 160

In velvet, white as snow, the troop was
gowned,

The seams with sparkling emeralds set
around ;

Their hoods and sleeves the same ; and
purpled o'er

With diamonds, pearls, and all the shining
store

Of eastern pomp : their long descending
train,

With rubies edged, and sapphires, swept
the plain :

High on their heads, with jewels richly set,
Each lady wore a radiant coronet.

Beneath the circles, all the quire was
graced

With chaplets green on their fair foreheads
placed. 170

Of laurel some, of woodbine many more ;
And wreaths of *Agnus castus* others bore ;

These last, who with those virgin crowns
were dressed,

Appeared in higher honour than the rest.

They danced around ; but in the midst
was seen

A lady of a more majestic mien ;

By stature, and by beauty, marked their
sovereign queen.

She in the midst began with sober grace ;
Her servants' eyes were fixed upon her
face,

And as she moved or turned, her motions
viewed, 180

Her measures kept, and step by step
pursued.

Methought she trod the ground with
greater grace,

With more of godhead shining in her face ;
And as in beauty she surpassed the quire,

So, nobler than the rest was her attire.

A crown of ruddy gold inclosed her brow,
Plain without pomp, and rich without a
show ;

A branch of *Agnus castus* in her hand

She bore aloft (her sceptre of command) ;

Admired, adored by all the circling
crowd, 190

For wheresoe'er she turned her face, they
bowed :

And as she danced, a roundelay she sung,

In honour of the laurel, ever young :

She raised her voice on high, and sung so
clear,

The fawns came scudding from the groves
to hear :

And all the bending forest lent an ear.

At every close she made, the attending
throng

Replied, and bore the burden of the song :

So just, so small, yet in so sweet a note,
It seemed the music melted in the
throat. 200

Thus dancing on, and singing as they
danced,

They to the middle of the mead advanced,
Till round my arbour a new ring they
made,

And footed it about the secret shade.

O'erjoyed to see the jolly troop so near,
But somewhat awed, I shook with holy
fear ;

Yet not so much, but that I noted well
Who did the most in song or dance excel.

Not long I had observed, when from
afar

I heard a sudden symphony of war ; 210
The neighing coursers, and the soldiers'
cry,

And sounding trumps that seemed to tear
the sky :

I saw soon after this, behind the grove
From whence the ladies did in order move,
Come issuing out in arms a warrior train,
That like a deluge poured upon the plain :

On barbed steeds they rode in proud
array,

Thick as the college of the bees in May,
When swarming o'er the dusky fields they
fly,

New to the flowers, and intercept the
sky. 220

So fierce they drove, their coursers were so
fleet,

That the turf trembled underneath their
feet.

To tell their costly furniture were long,
The summer's day would end before the
song :

To purchase but the tenth of all their
store,

Would make the mighty Persian monarch
poor.

Yet what I can, I will ; before the rest

The trumpets issued in white mantles
dressed :

A numerous troop, and all their heads
around

With chaplets green of cerrial oak were
crowned, 230

And at each trumpet was a banner bound :
Which waving in the wind displayed at
large

Their master's coat of arms, and knightly
charge.

Broad were the banners, and of snowy hue,
A purer web the silkworm never drew.

The chief about their necks the scutcheons
wore,

With orient pearls and jewels powdered
o'er :

Broad were their collars too, and every one
Was set about with many a costly stone.

Next these, of kings at arms a goodly
train 240

In proud array came prancing o'er the
plain :

Their cloaks were cloth of silver mixed with
gold,

And garlands green around their temples
rolled :

Rich crowns were on their royal scutcheons
placed,

With sapphires, diamonds, and with rubies
graced .

And as the trumpets their appearance made,
So these in habits were alike arrayed ;

But with a pace more sober, and more
slow ;

And twenty, rank in rank, they rode a-row.
The pursuivants came next, in number
more ; 250

And like the heralds each his scutcheon
bore :

Clad in white velvet all their troop they
led,

With each an oaken chaplet on his head.

Nine royal knights in equal rank succeed,
Each warrior mounted on a fiery steed ;

In golden armour glorious to behold ;
The rivets of their arms were nailed with
gold.

Their surcoats of white ermine fur were
made ;

With cloth of gold between, that cast a
glittering shade.

The trappings of their steeds were of the
same ; 260

The golden fringe even set the ground on
flame,

And drew a precious trail : a crown divine
Of laurel did about their temples twine.

Three henchmen were for every knight
assigned,

All in rich livery clad, and of a kind ;

White velvet, but unshorn, for cloaks they wore,
And each within his hand a truncheon bore :

The foremost held a helm of rare device ;
A prince's ransom would not pay the price.
The second bore the buckler of his knight,

The third of cornel-wood a spear upright,
Headed with piercing steel, and polished bright.

Like to their lords their equipage was seen,
And all their foreheads crowned with garlands green.

And after these came, armed with spear and shield,

An host so great as covered all the field :
And all their foreheads, like the knights before,

With laurels evergreen were shaded o'er,
Or oak, or other leaves of lasting kind,
Tenacious of the stem, and firm against the wind.

Some in their hands, beside the lance and shield,

The boughs of woodbine or of hawthorn held,

Or branches for their mystic emblems took,
Of palm, of laurel, or of cerrial onk.

Thus marching to the trumpet's lofty sound,
Drawn in two lines adverse they wheeled around,

And in the middle meadow took their ground.

Among themselves the tourney they divide,
In equal squadrons ranged on either side.

Then turned their horses' heads, and man to man,

And steed to steed opposed, the jousts began.
They lightly set their lances in the rest,
And, at the sign, against each other pressed :

They met. I sitting at my ease beheld
The mixed events, and fortunes of the field.
Some broke their spears, some tumbled horse and man,

And round the field the lightened coursers ran.

An hour and more, like tides, in equal sway
They rushed, and won by turns, and lost the day :

At length the nine (who still together held)
Their fainting foes to shameful flight compelled,

And with resistless force o'erran the field.
Thus, to their fame, when finished was the fight,

The victors from their lofty steeds alight :
Like them dismounted all the warlike train,

And two by two proceeded o'er the plain :
Till to the fair assembly they advanced,
Who near the secret arbour sung and danced.

The ladies left their measures at the sight,
To meet the chiefs returning from the fight,

And each with open arms embraced her chosen knight.

Amid the plain a spreading laurel stood,
The grace and ornament of all the wood :
That pleasing shade they sought, a soft retreat

From sudden April showers, a shelter from the heat ;

Her leafy arms with such extent were spread,

So near the clouds was her aspiring head,
That hosts of birds, that wing the liquid air,

Perched in the boughs, had nightly lodging there.

And flocks of sheep beneath the shade from far

Might hear the rattling hail, and wintry war ;

From heaven's inclemency here found retreat,

Enjoyed the cool, and shunned the scorching heat :

A hundred knights might there at ease abide ;

And every knight a lady by his side :
The trunk itself such odours did bequeath,
That a Moluccan breeze to these was common breath.

The lords and ladies here, approaching,
paid

Their homage, with a low obeisance made ;
And seemed to venerate the sacred
shade. 330

These rites performed, their pleasures they
pursue,

With songs of love, and mix with measures
new ;

Around the holy tree their dance they
frame,

And every champion leads his chosen dame.

I cast my sight upon the farther field,

And a fresh object of delight beheld :

For from the region of the West I heard

New music sound, and a new troop ap-
peared ;

Of knights and ladies mixed, a jolly band.

But all on foot they marched, and hand in
hand. 340

The ladies dressed in rich symars were
seen

Of Florence satin, flowered with white and
green,

And for a shade betwixt the bloomy grid-
elin.

The borders of their petticoats below

Were guarded thick with rubies on a row ;

And every damsel wore upon her head

Of flowers a garland blended white and red.

Attired in mantles all the knights were
seen,

That gratified the view with cheerful green ;

Their chaplets of their ladies' colours
were, 350

Composed of white and red, to shade their
shining hair.

Before the merry troop the minstrels
played,

All in their masters' liveries were arrayed,

And clad in green, and on their temples
wore

The chaplets white and red their ladies
bore.

Their instruments were various in their
kind,

Some for the bow, and some for breathing
wind :

The sawtry, pipe, and hautboy's noisy
band,

And the soft lute trembling beneath the
touching hand.

A tuft of daisies on a flowery lay 360

They saw, and thitherward they bent their
way ;

To this both knights and dames their hom-
age made,

And due obeisance to the daisy paid.

And then the band of flutes began to play,

To which a lady sung a virelay :

And still at every close she would repeat

The burden of the song, " The daisy is so
sweet.

The daisy is so sweet," when she begun,

The troop of knights and dames continued
on.

The consort and the voice so charmed my
ear, 370

And soothed my soul, that it was heaven to
hear.

But soon their pleasure passed : at noon
of day,

The sun with sultry beams began to play :

Not Sirius shoots a fiercer flame from high,

When with his poisonous breath he blasts
the sky ;

Then drooped the fading flow'rs (their
beauty fled)

And closed their sickly eyes, and hung the
head,

And rivelled up with heat, lay dying in their
bed.

The ladies gasped, and scarcely could re-
spire ;

The breath they drew, no longer air, but
fire ; 380

The fainty knights were scorched, and
knew not where

To run for shelter, for no shade was near ;

And after this the gathering clouds amain

Poured down a storm of rattling hail and
rain :

And lightning flashed betwixt : the field
and flowers,

Burnt up before, were buried in the
showers.

The ladies and the knights, no shelter nigh,
Bare to the weather, and the wintry sky,
Were dropping wet, disconsolate, and wan,
And through their thin array received the rain ; 380

While those in white, protected by the tree,
Saw pass in vain the assault, and stood
from danger free,

But as compassion moved their gentle
minds,

When ceased the storm, and silent were the
winds,

Displeased at what, not suffering they had
seen,

They went to cheer the faction of the
green :

The queen in white array, before her band,
Saluting, took her rival by the hand ;

So did the knights and dames, with courtly
grace,

And with behaviour sweet their foes em-
brace. 400

Then thus the queen with laurel on her
brow,

"Fair sister, I have suffered in your woe ;
Nor shall bewanting aught within my power,
For your relief in my refreshing bower."

That other answered with a lowly look,
And soon the gracious invitation took :
For ill at ease both she and all her train
The scorching sun had borne, and beating
rain.

Like courtesy was used by all in white,
Each dame a dame received, and every
knight a knight. 410

The laurel champions with their swords in-
vade

The neighbouring forests, where the jousts
were made,

And serewood from the rotten hedges took,
And seeds of latent fire from flints provoke :
A cheerful blaze arose, and by the fire
They warmed their frozen feet, and dried
their wet attire.

Refreshed with heat, the ladies sought
around

For virtuous herbs, which gathered from
the ground

They squeezed the juice, and cooling oint-
ment made,

Which on their sunburnt cheeks, and their
chapt skins they laid : 420

Then sought green salads, which they bade
them eat,

A sovereign remedy for inward heat.

The Lady of the Leaf ordained a feast,
And made the Lady of the Flower her guest :
When, lo ! a bower ascended on the plain,
With sudden seats ordained, and large for
either train.

This bower was near my pleasant harbour
placed,

That I could hear and see whatever passed :
The ladies sat with each a knight between,
Distinguished by their colours, white and
green ; 430

The vanquished party with the victors
joined,

Nor wanted sweet discourse, the banquet
of the mind.

Meantime the minstrels played on either
side,

Vain of their art, and for the mastery vied :
The sweet contention lasted for an hour,
And reached my secret harbour from the
bower.

The sun was set ; and Vesper, to supply
His absent beams, had lighted up the sky.
When Philomel, officious all the day
To sing the service of the ensuing May, 440
Fled from her laurel shade, and winged her
flight

Directly to the queen arrayed in white ;
And hopping sat familiar on her hand,
A new musician, and increased the band.

The goldfinch, who, to shun the scalding
heat,

Had changed the medlar for a safer seat,
And hid in bushes 'scaped the bitter shower,
Now perched upon the Lady of the Flower ;
And either songster holding out their
throats,

And folding up their wings, renewed their
notes ;

As if all day, preluding to the fight, 450
They only had rehearsed, to sing by night.

The banquet ended, and the battle done,
They danced by starlight and the friendly
moon :

And when they were to part, the laureate
queen

Supplied with steeds the lady of the green,
Her and her train conducting on the way,
The moon to follow, and avoid the day.

This when I saw, inquisitive to know
The secret moral of the mystic show, 480
I started from my shade, in hopes to find
Some nymph to satisfy my longing mind :
And as my fair adventure fell, I found
A lady all in white, with laurel crowned,
Who closed the rear, and softly paced
along,

Repeating to herself the former song.

With due respect my body I inclined,

As to some being of superior kind,

And made my court according to the day,
Wishing her queen and her a happy
May. 470

"Great thanks, my daughter," with a
gracious bow,

She said ; and I, who much desired to
know

Of whence she was, yet fearful how to break
My mind, adventured humbly thus to
speak :

"Madam, might I presume and not offend,
So may the stars and shining moon attend
Your nightly sports, as you vouchsafe to
tell,

What nymphs they were who mortal forms
excel,

And what the knights who fought in listed
fields so well."

To this the dame replied : "Fair daughter,
know, 480

That what you saw was all a fairy show :

And all those airy shapes you now behold
Were human bodies once, and clothed with
earthly mould.

Our souls, not yet prepared for upper light,
Till doomsday wander in the shades of
night ;

This only holiday of all the year,

We privileged in sunshine may appear :

songs and dance we celebrate the
day,

And with due honours usher in the May.

At other times we reign by night alone, 490

And posting through the skies pursue the
moon ;

But when the moon arises, none are found ;
For cruel Demogorgon walks the round,
And if he finds a fairy lag in light,
He drives the wretch before, and lashes
into night.

"All courteous are by kind ; and ever
proud

With friendly offices to help the good.

In every land we have a larger space
Than what is known to you of mortal
race :

Where we with green adorn our fairy
bowers, 500

And even this grove, unseen before, is
ours,

Know farther, every lady clothed in white,
And, crowned with oak and laurel every
knight,

Are servants to the Leaf, by liveries known
Of innocence ; and I myself am one.

Saw you not her so graceful to behold,

In white attire, and crowned with radiant
gold ?

The sovereign lady of our land is she,

Diana called, the queen of chastity :

And, for the spotless name of maid she
bears, 510

That *Agnus castus* in her hand appears ;
And all her train, with leafy chaplets

crowned,

Were for unblamed virginity renowned ;

But those the chief and highest in command
Who bear those holy branches in their
hand :

The knights adorned with laurel crowns
are they,

Whom death nor danger ever could dismay ;
Victorious names, who made the world
obey :

Who, while they lived, in deeds of arms
excelled,

And after death for deities were held. 520

But those who wear the woodbine on their brow,
 Were knights of love, who never broke their vow;
 Firm to their plighted faith, and ever free
 From fears, and fickle chance, and jealousy.
 The lords and ladies, who the woodbine bear,
 As true as Tristram and Isotta * were."
 "But what are those," said I, "the unconquered nine,
 Who crowned with laurel wreaths in golden armour shine?
 And who the knights in green, and what the train
 Of ladies dressed with daisies on the plain?"
 Why both the bands in worship disagree,
 And some adore the flower, and some the tree?"
 "Just is your suit, fair daughter," said the dame:
 "Those laurelled chiefs were men of mighty fame;
 Nine worthies were they called of different rites,
 Three Jews, three Pagans, and three Christian knights. †
 These, as you see, ride foremost in the field,
 As they the foremost rank of honour held,
 And all in deeds of chivalry excelled:
 Their temples wreathed with leaves, that still renew;
 For deathless laurel is the victor's due:
 Who bear the bows were knights in Arthur's reign,
 Twelve they, and twelve the peers of Charlemagne:
 For bows the strength of brawny arms imply,
 Emblems of valour and of victory.

Behold an order yet of newer date,
 Doubling their number, equal in their state;
 Our England's ornament, the crown's defence,
 In battle brave, protectors of their prince:
 Unchanged by fortune, to their sovereign true,
 For which their manly legs are bound with blue.
 These, of the Garter called, of faith unstained
 In fighting fields the laurel have obtained,
 And well repaid the honours which they gained.
 The laurel wreaths were first by Caesar worn,
 And still they Caesar's successors adorn:
 One leaf of this is immortality,
 And more of worth than all the world can buy."
 "One doubt remains," said I: "the dames in green,
 What were their qualities, and who their queen?"
 "Flora commands," said she, "those nymphs and knights,
 Who lived in slothful ease and loose delights;
 Who never acts of honour durst pursue,
 The men inglorious knights, the ladies all untrue;
 Who, nursed in idleness, and trained in courts,
 Passed all their precious hours in plays and sports,
 Till death behind came stalking on unseen,
 And withered (like the storm) the freshness of their green.
 These, and their mates, enjoy their present hour,
 And therefore pay their homage to the Flower.
 But knights in knightly deeds should persevere,
 And still continue what at first they were;
 Continue, and proceed in honour's fair career.

* *Tristram and Isotta*.] The hero and heroine of many Legends. See Matthew Arnold's Poems.

† Called the Nine Worthies. The Jews were Joshua, David, and Judas Maccabeus; the Pagans, Alexander the Great, Hector, and Pompey; the Christians, King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey de Boulogne.

No room for cowardice, or dull delay ;
 From good to better they should urge their way.
 For this with golden spurs the chiefs are graced,
 With pointed rowels armed to mend their haste.
 For this with lasting leaves their brows are bound ;
 For laurel is the sign of labour crowned,
 Which bears the bitter blast, nor shaken falls to ground ; 580
 From winter winds it suffers no decay,
 For ever fresh and fair, and every month is May.
 Even when the vital sap retreats below,
 Even when the hoary head is hid in snow,
 The life is in the leaf, and still between
 The fits of falling snow appears the streaky green.
 Not so the flower, which lasts for little space,
 A short-lived good, and an uncertain grace ;
 This way and that the feeble stem is driven,
 Weak to sustain the storms, and injuries of heaven. 590
 Propped by the spring, it lifts aloft the head,
 But of a sickly beauty, soon to shed ;
 In summer living, and in winter dead.
 For things of tender kind, for pleasure made,
 Shoot up with swift increase, and sudden are decayed."

With humble words, the wisest I could frame,
 And proffered service, I repaid the dame ;
 That, of her grace, she gave her maid to know
 The secret meaning of this moral show.
 And she, to prove what profit I had made 600
 Of mystic truth, in fables first conveyed,
 Demanded, till the next returning May,
 Whether the Leaf or Flower I would obey ?
 I chose the Leaf ; she smiled with sober cheer,
 And wished me fair adventure for the year,
 And gave me charms and sigils, for defence
 Against ill tongues that scandal innocence :
 " But I," said she, " my fellows must pursue,
 Already past the plain, and out of view."
 We parted thus : I homeward sped my way, 610
 Bewildered in the wood till dawn of day :
 And met the merry crew who danced about the May.
 Then late refreshed with sleep, I rose to write
 The visionary vigils of the night.
 Blush, as thou mayest, my little book with shame,
 Nor hope with homely verse to purchase fame ;
 For such thy maker chose ; and so designed
 Thy simple style to suit thy lowly kind.

THE WIFE OF BATH.

HER TALE.

IN days of old, when Arthur filled the throne,
 Whose acts and fame to foreign lands were blown ;
 The king of elfs and little fairy queen
 Gambolled on heaths, and danced on every green ;
 And where the jolly troop had led the round,
 The grass unbidden rose, and marked the ground :
 Nor darkling did they dance, the silver light
 Of Phœbe served to guide their steps aright,
 And with their tripping pleased, prolong the night,

Her beams they followed; where at full she
played, 10

No longer than she shed her horns they
stayed,

From thence with airy flight to foreign
lands conveyed.

Above the rest our Britain held they dear,
More solemnly they kept their sabbaths
here,

And made more spacious rings, and
revelled half the year.

I speak of ancient times, for now the
swain,

Returning late may pass the woods in
vain,

And never hope to see the nightly train :

In vain the dairy now with mints is dressed,
The dairy-maid expects no fairy guest 20

To skim the bowls, and after pay the feast.
She sighs, and shakes her empty shoes in
vain,

No silver penny to reward her pain :

For priests with prayers, and other godly
gear,

Have made the merry goblins disappear ;
And where they played their merry pranks
before,

Have sprinkled holy water on the floor :
And friars that through the wealthy regions
run,

Thick as the motes that twinkle in the sun,
Resort to farmers rich, and bless their
halls, 30

And exorcise the beds, and cross the walls :
This makes the fairy quires forsake the
place,

When once 'tis hallowed with the rites of
grace :

But in the walks where wicked elves have
been,

The learning of the parish now is seen,
The midnight parson, posting o'er the
green,

With gown tuck'd up, to wakes, for Sunday
next,

With humming ale encouraging his text ;
Nor wants the holy leer to country-girl
betwixt.

From fiends and imps he sets the village
free, 40

There haunts not any incubus but he.

The maids and women need no danger
fear

To walk by night, and sanctity so near ;
For by some haycock, or some shady
thorn,

He bids his beads both even-song and
morn.

It so befel in this King Arthur's reign,
A lusty knight was pricking o'er the plain ;
A bachelor he was, and of the courtly
train.

It happened as he rode, a damsel gay
In russet robes to market took her way : 50
Soon on the girl he cast an amorous eye,
So straight she walked, and on her pasterns
high :

If seeing her behind he liked her pace,
Now turning short, he better likes her face.
He lights in haste, and, full of youthful
fire,

By force accomplished his obscene desire :
This done, away he rode, not unespied,
For swarming at his back the country
cried :

And once in view they never lost the sight,
But seized, and pinioned brought to court
the knight. 60

Then courts of kings were held in high
renown,

Ere made the common brothels of the
town :

There, virgins honourable vows received,
But chaste as maids in monasteries lived ;
The king himself, to nuptial ties a slave,
No bad example to his poets gave :
And they, not bad, but in a vicious age,
Had not, to please the prince, debauched
the stage.

Now what should Arthur do? He loved
the knight,

But sovereign monarchs are the source of
right : 70

Moved by the damsel's tears and common
cry,

He doomed the brutal ravisher to die.

But fair Geneura rose in his defence,
And prayed so hard for mercy from the
prince,

That to his Queen the King the offender gave,
And left it in her power to kill or save :
This gracious act the ladies all approve,
Who thought it much a man should die for
love ;

And with their mistress joined in close
debate,

(Covering their kindness with dissembled
hate ;) 80

If not to free him, to prolong his fate.

At last agreed, they called him by consent

Before the Queen and female parliament ;

And the fair speaker, rising from the chair,

Did thus the judgment of the House declare.

" Sir knight, though I have asked thy life,
yet still

Thy destiny depends upon my will :

Nor hast thou other surety than the grace

Not due to thee from our offended race.

But as our kind is of a softer mould, 80

And cannot blood without a sigh behold,

I grant thee life ; reserving still the power

To take the forfeit when I see my hour :

Unless thy answer to my next demand

Shall set thee free from our avenging hand.

The question, whose solution I require,

Is, What the sex of women most desire ?

In this dispute thy judges are at strife ;

Beware ; for on thy wit depends thy life.

Yet (lest, surprised, unknowing what to
say, 100

Thou damn thyself) we give thee farther
day :

A year is thine to wander at thy will ;

And learn from others, if thou want'st the
skill.

But, not to hold our proffered turn in
scorn,

Good sureties will we have for thy return ;

That at the time prefixed thou shalt obey,

And at thy pledge's peril keep thy day."

Woe was the knight at this severe com-
mand ;

But well he knew 'twas bootless to with-
stand ;

The terms accepted, as the fair ordain, 110
He put in bail for his return again,

And promised answer at the day assigned,

The best, with Heaven's assistance, he could
find.

His leave thus taken, on his way he
went

With heavy heart, and full of discontent,
Misdoubting much, and fearful of the
event.

'Twas hard the truth of such a point to
find,

As was not yet agreed among the kind.

Thus on he went ; still anxious more and
more,

Asked all he met, and knocked at every
door ; 120

Inquired of men ; but made his chief
request

To learn from women what they loved the
best.

They answered each according to her mind

To please herself, not all the female kind.

One was for wealth, another was for
place ;

Crones, old and ugly, wished a better face.

The widow's wish was oftentimes to wed ;

The wanton maids were all for sport a-bed.

Some said the sex were pleased with hand-
some lies,

And some gross flattery loved without dis-
guise : 130

" Truth is," says one, " he seldom fails to
win,

Who flatters well ; for that's our darling
sin.

But long attendance, and a duteous mind,

Will work even with the wisest of the
kind."

One thought the sex's prime felicity

Was from the bonds of wedlock to be free :

Their pleasures, hours, and actions all
their own,

And uncontrolled to give account to none.

Some wish a husband-fool ; but such are
curst,

For fools perverse of husbands are the
worst : 140

All women would be counted chaste and wise,

Nor should our spouses see, but with our eyes ;

For fools will prate ; and though they want the wit

To find close faults, yet open blots will hit ;

Though better for their ease to hold their tongue,

For womankind was never in the wrong.

No noise ensues, and quarrels last for life ;

The wife abhors the fool, the fool the wife.

And some men say, that great delight have we,

To be for truth extolled, and secrecy : 180

And constant in one purpose still to dwell ;

And not our husbands' counsels to reveal.

But that's a fable : for our sex is frail,

Inventing rather than not tell a tale.

Like leaky sieves no secrets we can hold :

Witness the famous tale that Ovid told.

Midas the king, as in his book appears,

By Phœbus was endowed with asses' ears,

Which under his long locks he well concealed,

(As monarchs' vices must not be revealed) 180

For fear the people have 'em in the wind,

Who long ago were neither dumb nor blind :

Nor apt to think from Heaven their title springs,

Since Jove and Mars left off begetting kings.

This Midas knew ; and durst communicate

To none but to his wife his ears of state :

One must be trusted, and he thought her fit,

As passing prudent, and a parlous wit.

To this sagacious confessor he went,

And told her what a gift the gods had sent : 170

But told it under matrimonial seal,

With strict injunction never to reveal.

The secret heard, she plighted him her troth,

(And sacred sure is every woman's oath)

The royal malady should rest unknown,

Both for her husband's honour and her own :

But ne'ertheless she pined with discontent ;
The counsel rumbled till it found a vent.

The thing she knew she was obliged to hide ;

By interest and by oath the wife was tied ; 180

But, if she told it not, the woman died.

Loth to betray a husband and a prince,

But she must burst, or blab, and no pretence

Of honour tied her tongue from self-defence.

A marshy ground commodiously was near,

Thither she ran, and held her breath for fear,

Lest if a word she spoke of any thing,

That word might be the secret of the king.

Thus full of counsel to the fen she went,

Griped all the way, and longing for a vent ; 190

Arrived, by pure necessity compelled,

On her majestic marrow-bones she kneeled :

Then to the water's brink she laid her head :

And, as a bittour bumps within a reed,

"To thee alone, O lake," she said, "I tell,
(And, as thy queen, command thee to conceal.)

Beneath his locks the king my husband wears

A goodly royal pair of asses' ears :

Now I have eased my bosom of the pain,

Till the next longing fit return again." 200

Thus through a woman was the secret known :

Tell us, and in effect you tell the town.

But to my tale. The knight with heavy cheer,

Wandering in vain, had now consumed the year :

One day was only left to solve the doubt,

Yet knew no more than when he first set out.

But home he must, and as the award had been,

Yield up his body captive to the Queen.

In this despairing state he happened to ride,

As fortune led him, by a forest side : 210

Lonely the vale, and full of horror stood,

Brown with the shade of a religious wood :

When full before him at the noon of night,
(The moon was up, and shot a gleamy light)
He saw a quire of ladies in a round
That featly footing seemed to skim the
ground :

Thus dancing hand in hand, so light they
were,

He knew not where they trod, on earth or
air.

At speed he drove, and came a sudden
guest,

In hope, where many women were, at
least 230

Some one by chance might answer his re-
quest.

But faster than his horse the ladies flew,
And in a trice were vanished out of view.

One only hag remained ; but fouler far
Than grandame apes in Indian forests are ;
Against a withered oak she leaned her
weight,

Propped on her trusty staff, not half up-
right,

And dropped an awkward courtesy to the
knight.

Then said, " What makes you, Sir, so late
abroad

Without a guide, and this no beaten road ? 230
Or want you aught that here you hope to
find,

Or travel for some trouble in your mind ?
The last I guess ; and if I read aright,
Those of our sex are bound to serve a
knight ;

Perhaps good counsel may your grief
assuage,

Then tell your pain ; for wisdom is in age."

To this the knight : " Good mother,
would you know

The secret cause and spring of all my
woe ?

My life must with to-morrow's light expire,
Unless I tell what women most desire. 240

Now could you help me at this hard essay,
Or for your inborn goodness, or for pay ;
Yours is my life, redeemed by your advice,
Ask what you please, and I will pay the
price :

The proudest kerchief of the court shall
rest

Well satisfied of what they love the best."
" Plight me thy faith," quoth she, " that
what I ask,

Thy danger over, and performed thy task,
That thou shalt give for hire of thy de-
mand ;

Here take thy oath, and seal it on my
hand ; 230

I warrant thee, on peril of my life,
Thy words shall please both widow, maid,
and wife."

More words there needed not to move
the knight,

To take her offer, and his truth to plight.
With that she spread a mantle on the
ground,

And, first inquiring whither he was bound,
Bade him not fear, though long and rough
the way,

At court he should arrive ere break of day ;
His horse should find the way without a
guide.

She said : with fury they began to ride, 230
He on the midst, the beldam at his side.

The horse, what devil drove I cannot tell,
But only this, they sped their journey well :
And all the way the crone informed the
knight,

How he should answer the demand aright.

To court they came ; the news was
quickly spread

Of his returning to redeem his head.

The female senate was assembled soon,
With all the mob of women in the town :

The Queen sat lord chief justice of the
hall, 270

And bade the crier cite the criminal.

The knight, appeared ; and silence they
proclaim :

Then first the culprit answered to his
name :

And, after forms of law, was last required
To name the thing that women most
desired.

The offender, taught his lesson by the way,
And by his counsel ordered what to say,

"Thus bold began : " My lady liege," said he,
 " What all your sex desire is, Sovereignty.
 The wife affects her husband to com-
 mand ; 280

All must be hers, both money, house, and
 land.

The maids are mistresses even in their
 name ;

And of their servants full dominion claim.

This, at the peril of my head, I say,

A blunt plain truth, the sex aspires to
 sway,

You to rule all, while we, like slaves, obey."
 There was not one, or widow, maid or wife,
 But said the knight had well deserved his
 life.

Even fair Geneura, with a blush, confessed
 The man had found what women love the
 best. 290

Up starts the beldam, who was there un-
 seen,

And, reverence made, accosted thus the
 Queen :

" My liege," said she, " before the court
 arise,

May I, poor wretch, find favour in your
 eyes,

To grant my just request : 'twas I who
 taught

The knight this answer, and inspired his
 thought ;

None but a woman could a man direct

To tell us women, what we most affect.

But first I swore him on his knightly troth
 (And here demand performance of his
 oath), 300

To grant the boon that next I should
 desire ;

He gave his faith, and I expect my hire :

My promise is fulfilled : I saved his life,

And claim his debt, to take me for his wife.
 The knight was asked, nor could his oath
 deny,

But hoped they would not force him to
 comply.

The women, who would rather wrest the
 laws,

Than let a sister-plaintiff lose the cause,

(As judges on the bench more gracious are,
 And more attent to brothers of the bar) 310
 Cried, one and all, the suppliant should
 have right,

And to the grandame hag adjudged the
 knight.

In vain he sighed, and oft with tears
 desired,

Some reasonable suit might be required.

But still the crone was constant to her note ;

The more he spoke, the more she stretched
 her throat.

In vain he proffered all his goods, to save
 His body destined to that living grave.

The liquorish hag rejects the pelf with
 scorn ;

And nothing but the man would serve her
 turn. 320

" Not all the wealth of eastern kings," said
 she,

" Have power to part my plighted love,
 and me :

And, old and ugly as I am, and poor,

Yet never will I break the faith I swore ;

For mine thou art by promise, during life,

And I thy loving and obedient wife."

" My love ! nay rather my damnation
 thou,"

Said he : " nor I am bound to keep my vow ;
 The fiend thy sire hath sent thee from
 below,

Else, how couldst thou my secret sorrows
 know ? 330

Avaunt, old witch ! for I renounce thy bed :

The Queen may take the forfeit of my head,
 Ere any of my race so foul a crone shall
 wed."

Both heard, the judge pronounced against
 the knight ;

So was he married in his own despite :

And all day after hid him as an owl,

Not able to sustain a sight so foul.

Perhaps the reader thinks I do him wrong,

To pass the marriage feast, and nuptial
 song :

Mirth there was none, the man was *à-la-*
mort, 340

And little courage had to make his court.

To bed they went, the bridegroom and the bride :

Was never such an ill-paired couple tied :
Restless he tossed, and tumbled to and fro,
And rolled, and wriggled further off, for woe.

The good old wife lay smiling by his side,
And caught him in her quivering arms,
and cried,

"When you my ravished predecessor saw,
You were not then become this man of straw ;

Had you been such, you might have 'scaped the law. 350

Is this the custom of King Arthur's court ?
Are all round-table knights of such a sort ?
Remember I am she who saved your life,
Your loving, lawful, and complying wife :
Not thus you swore in your unhappy hour,
Nor I for this return employed my power.
In time of need I was your faithful friend ;
Nor did I since, nor ever will offend,

Believe me, my loved lord, 'tis much unkind ;

What fury has possessed your altered mind ? 360

Thus on my wedding night—without pretence—

Come, turn this way, or tell me my offence.
If not your wife, let reason's rule persuade :
Name but my fault, amends shall soon be made."

"Amends! nay, that's impossible," said he,
What change of age or ugliness can be ?
Or could Medea's magic mend thy face,
Thou art descended from so mean a race,
That never knight was matched with such disgrace.

What wonder, madam, if I move my side, 370

When, if I turn, I turn to such a bride ?"

"And is this all that troubles you so sore ?"

"And what the devil couldst thou wish me more ?"

"Ah, Benedicite !" replied the crone :

"Then cause of just complaining have you none.

The remedy to this were soon applied,
Would you be like the bridegroom to the bride :

But, for you say a long descended race,
And wealth, and dignity, and power, and place,

Make gentlemen, and that your high degree 380

Is much disparaged to be matched with me ;

Know this, my lord, nobility of blood
Is but a glittering and fallacious good :

The nobleman is he, whose noble mind
Is filled with inborn worth, unborrowed from his kind.

The King of Heaven was in a manger laid,
And took His earth but from an humble Maid ;

Then what can birth, or mortal men, bestow ?

Since floods no higher than their fountains flow.

We, who for name and empty honour strive, 390

Our true nobility from Him derive.

Your ancestors, who puff your mind with pride,

And vast estates to mighty titles tied,
Did not your honour, but their own, advance ;

For virtue comes not by inheritance.

If your trilineate from your father's mind,

What are you else but of a bastard kind ?

Do as your great progenitors have done,

And, by their virtues, prove yourself their son.

No father can infuse or wit or grace ; 400

A mother comes across, and mars the race.

A grandsire or a grandame taints the blood,

And seldom three descents continue good.

Were virtue by descent, a noble name

Could never villanise his father's fame :

But, as the first, the last of all the line,

Would, like the sun, even in descending, shine.

Take fire, and bear it to the darkest house
Betwixt King Arthur's court and Caucasus ;

If you depart, the flame shall still remain, 410

And the bright blaze enlighten all the plain:
Nor, till the fuel perish, can decay,
By nature formed on things combustible to prey.

Such is not man, who, mixing better seed
With worse, begets a base degenerate breed.
The bad corrupts the good, and leaves behind

No trace of all the great begetter's mind.
The father sinks within his son, we see,
And often rises in the third degree;
If better luck a better mother give, 420
Chance gave us being, and by chance we live.

Such as our atoms were, even such are we,
Or call it Chance, or strong Necessity:
Thus loaded with dead weight, the will is free.

And thus it needs must be: for seed conjoined

Lets into nature's work the imperfect kind;
But fire, the enlivener of the general frame,
Is one, its operation still the same.
Its principle is in itself: while ours
Works, as confederates war, with mingled powers: 430

Or man or woman, which soever fails:
And, oft, the vigour of the worse prevails.

Æther with sulphur blended alters hue,
And casts a dusky gleam of Sodom blue.
Thus, in a brute, their ancient honour ends,
And the fair mermaid in a fish descends:
The line is gone; no longer duke or earl;
But, by himself degraded, turns a churl.
Nobility of blood is but renown
Of thy great fathers by their virtue known, 440

And a long trail of light, to thee descending down.

If in thy smoke it ends, their glories shine;
But infamy and villanage are thine.

Then what I said before is plainly showed,
The true nobility proceeds from God:
Nor left us by inheritance, but given
By bounty of our stars, and grace of Heaven.

Thus from a captive Servius Tullius rose,
Whom for his virtues the first Romans chose: 450

Fabricius from their walls repelled the foe,
Whose noble hands had exercised the plough.

From hence, my lord, and love, I thus conclude,
That though my homely ancestors were rude,

Mean as I am, yet I may have the grace
To make you father of a generous race:
And noble then am I, when I begin,
In virtue clothed, to cast the rags of sin.
If poverty be my upbraided crime,
And you believe in Heaven, there was a time

When He, the great Controller of our fate, 460
Deigned to be man, and lived in low estate;
Which He who had the world at His dispose,

If poverty were vice, would never choose.
Philosophers have said, and poets sing,
That a glad poverty's an honest thing.
Content is wealth, the riches of the mind;
And happy he who can that treasure find.
But the base miser starves amidst his store,
Broods on his gold, and, griping still at more,

Sits sadly pining, and believes he's poor. 470
The ragged beggar, though he want relief,
Has not to lose, and sings before the thief.
Want is a bitter and a hateful good,
Because its virtues are not understood:
Yet many things, impossible to thought,
Have been by need to full perfection brought:
The daring of the soul proceeds from thence,

Sharpness of wit, and active diligence;
Prudence at once, and fortitude, it gives,
And, if in patience taken, mends our lives; 480
For even that indigence, that brings me low,

Makes me myself, and Him above, to know.
A good which none would challenge, few would choose.

A fair possession, which mankind refuse.

If we from wealth to poverty descend,
Want gives to know the flatterer from the friend.

If I am old and ugly, well for you,
No lewd adulterer will my love pursue.
Nor jealousy, the bane of married life,
Shall haunt you for a withered homely wife. 490

For age and ugliness, as all agree,
Are the best guards of female chastity.

"Yet since I see your mind is worldly bent,

I'll do my best to further your content.
And therefore of two gifts in my dispose,
Think ere you speak, I grant you leave to choose :

Would you I should be still deformed and old,

Nauseous to touch, and loathsome to behold ;

On this condition to remain for life
A careful, tender, and obedient wife, 500
In all I can contribute to your ease,
And not in deed, or word, or thought displease ;

Or would you rather have me young and fair,

And take the chance that happens to your share ?

Temptations are in beauty, and in youth,
And how can you depend upon my truth ?
Now weigh the danger with the doubtful bliss,

And thank yourself, if aught should fall amiss."

Sore sighed the knight, who this long sermon heard ;

At length considering all, his heart he cheered ; 510

And thus replied : " My lady, and my wife,
To your wise conduct I resign my life ;
Choose you for me, for well you understand

The future good and ill, on either hand :

But if an humble husband may request,
Provide, and order all things for the best ;
Yours be the care to profit, and to please :
And let your subject servant take his ease."

"Then thus in peace," quoth she, "concludes the strife,

Since I am turned the husband, you the wife : 520

The matrimonial victory is mine,
Which, having fairly gained, I will resign ;
Forgive, if I have said or done amiss,
And seal the bargain with a friendly kiss :
I promised you but one content to share,
But now I will become both good and fair.
No nuptial quarrel shall disturb your ease ;
The business of my life shall be to please :
And for my beauty, that, as time shall try—
But draw the curtain first, and cast your eye." 530

He looked, and saw a creature heavenly fair,

In bloom of youth, and of a charming air.
With joy he turned, and seized her ivory arm,

And, like Pygmalion, found the statue warm.

Small arguments there needed to prevail,
A storm of kisses poured as thick as hail.
Thus long in mutual bliss they lay embraced,

And their first love continued to the last :
One sunshine was their life, no cloud between ;

Nor ever was a kinder couple seen. 540
And so may all our lives like theirs be led ;

Heaven send the maids young husbands fresh in bed :

May widows wed as often as they can,
And ever for the better change their man.
And some devouring plague pursue their lives,
Who will not well be governed by their wives.

THE CHARACTER OF A GOOD PARSON.

A PARISH priest was of the pilgrim train ;
 An awful, reverend, and religious man.
 His eyes diffused a venerable grace,
 And charity itself was in his face.
 Rich was his soul, though his attire was
 poor ;
 (As God had clothed His own ambassador ;)
 For such, on earth, his blessed Redeemer
 bore.
 Of sixty years he seemed ; and well might
 last
 To sixty more, but that he lived too fast ;
 Refined himself to soul, to curb the sense ; 10
 And made almost a sin of abstinence.
 Yet, had his aspect nothing of severe,
 But such a face as promised him sincere.
 Nothing reserved or sullen was to see :
 But sweet regards ; and pleasing sanctity :
 Mild was his accent, and his action free.
 With eloquence innate his tongue was
 armed :
 Though harsh the precept, yet the preacher
 charmed.
 For letting down the golden chain from
 high,
 He drew his audience upward to the sky ; 20
 And oft, with holy hymns, he charmed their
 ears :
 (A music more melodious than the spheres.)
 For David left him, when he went to rest,
 His lyre ; and after him he sung the best.
 He bore his great commission in his look :
 But sweetly tempered awe ; and softened
 all he spoke.
 He preached the joys of heaven, and pains
 of hell ;
 And warned the sinner with becoming zeal ;
 But on eternal mercy loved to dwell.
 He taught the gospel rather than the law ; 30
 And forced himself to drive ; but loved to
 draw.
 For fear but freezes minds ; but love, like
 heat,
 Exhales the soul sublime, to seek her
 native seat.
 To threats the stubborn sinner oft is hard,
 Wrapped in his crimes, against the storm
 prepared ;
 But, when the milder beams of mercy play,
 He melts, and throws his cumbrous cloak
 away.
 Lightning and thunder (heaven's artillery)
 As harbingers before the Almighty fly :
 Those but proclaim his style, and dis-
 appear ;
 The stiller sound succeeds, and God is
 there.
 The tithes, his parish freely paid, he
 took ;
 But never sued, or cursed with bell and
 book.
 With patience bearing wrong ; but offering
 none :
 Since every man is free to lose his own.
 The country churls, according to their kind,
 (Who grudge their dues, and love to be
 behind,)
 The less he sought his offerings, pinched
 the more,
 And praised a priest contented to be poor.
 Yet of his little he had some to spare, 40
 To feed the famished, and to clothe the bare :
 For mortified he was to that degree,
 A poorer than himself, he would not see.
 "True priests," he said, "and preachers of
 the Word,
 Were only stewards of their sovereign Lord ;
 Nothing was theirs ; but all the public store :
 Entrusted riches, to relieve the poor.
 Who, should they steal, for want of his
 relief,
 He judged himself accomplice with the thief,

Wide was his parish; not contracted
close 80

In streets, but here and there a straggling
house;

Yet still he was at hand, without request,
To serve the sick; to succour the distressed:
Tempting, on foot, alone, without affright,
The dangers of a dark tempestuous night.

All this the good old man performed
alone,

Nor spared his pains; for curate he had none.
Nor durst he trust another with his care;
Nor rode himself to Paul's, the public fair,
To chaffer for preferment with his gold, 70
Where bishoprics and sinecures are sold.

But duly watched his flock, by night and
day;

And from the prowling wolf redeemed the
prey;

And hungry sent the wily fox away.

The proud he tamed, the penitent he
cheered:

Nor to rebuke the rich offender feared.

His preaching much, but more his practice
wrought;

(A living sermon of the truths he taught;)

For this by rules severe his life he squared:
That all might see the doctrine which they
heard. 80

"For priests," he said, "are patterns for
the rest:

(The gold of heaven, who bear the God
impressed;)

But when the precious coin is kept unclean,
The Sovereign's image is no longer seen.
If they be foul on whom the people trust,
Well may the baser brass contract a rust."

The prelate, for his holy life, he prized;

The worldly pomp of prelacy despised,
His Saviour came not with a gaudy show;
Nor was His kingdom of the world below.
Patience in want, and poverty of mind, 90
These marks of Church and Churchmen he
designed,

And living taught, and dying left behind.

The crown He wore was of the pointed
thorn:

In purple, He was crucified, not born.

They who contend for place and high
degree,

Are not His sons, but those of Zebedee.

Not but He knew the signs of earthly
power

Might well become Saint Peter's successor;
The holy father holds a double reign, 100
The prince may keep his pomp, the fisher
must be plain.

Such was the saint; who shone with
every grace,

Reflecting, Moses like, his Maker's face.

God saw His image lively was expressed;
And His own work, as in creation, blessed.

The tempter saw him too with envious eye;
And, as on Job, demanded leave to try.

He took the time when Richard was de-
posed,

And high and low with happy Harry closed.
This prince, though great in arms, the priest

withstood: 110

Near though he was, yet not the next of
blood.

Had Richard, unconstrained, resigned the
throne,

A king can give no more than is his own:

The title stood entailed had Richard had a
son.

Conquest, an odious name, was laid aside,
Where all submitted, none the battle tried.

The senseless plea of right by providence
Was, by a flattering priest, invented since:

And lasts no longer than the present sway;
But justifies the next who comes in play. 120

The people's right remains; let those who
dare

Dispute their power, when they the judges
are.

He joined not in their choice, because he
knew

Worse might, and often did from change
ensue.

Much to himself he thought; but little
spoke;

And, undeprived, his benefice forsook.

Now, through the land, his cure of souls
he stretched;

And like a primitive apostle preached,

Still cheerful ; ever constant to his call ;
 By many followed ; loved by most ; admired
 by all.

130

With what he begged, his brethren he re-
 lieved ;

And gave the charities himself received.

Gave while he taught ; and edified the more,
 Because he showed, by proof, 'twas easy to
 be poor.

He went not with the crowd to see a
 shrine ;

But fed us, by the way, with food divine.

In deference to his virtues, I forbear

To show you what the rest in orders
 were :

This brilliant is so spotless and so bright,

He needs no foil, but shines by his own
 proper light.

140

TRANSLATIONS FROM BOCCACE.*

SIGISMONDA AND GUISCARDO.

WHILE Norman Tancred in Salerno
 reigned,
 The title of a gracious prince he gained ;
 Till turned a tyrant in his latter days,
 He lost the lustre of his former praise,
 And, from the bright meridian where he
 stood
 Descending, dipped his hands in lovers'
 blood.
 This prince, of Fortune's favour long pos-
 sessed,
 Yet was with one fair daughter only blessed ;
 And blessed he might have been with her
 alone :
 But oh ! how much more happy had he
 none !
 She was his care, his hope, and his delight,
 Most in his thought, and ever in his sight :
 Next, nay beyond his life, he held her dear ;
 She lived by him, and now he lived in her.
 For this, when ripe for marriage, he delayed
 Her nuptial bands, and kept her long a
 maid,
 As envying any else should share a part
 Of what was his, and claiming all her heart.

At length, as public decency required,
 And all his vassals eagerly desired,
 With mind averse, he rather underwent
 His people's will, than gave his own consent.
 So was she torn, as from a lover's side,
 And made almost in his despite a bride.

Short were her marriage joys ; for, in the
 prime

Of youth, her lord expired before his time ;
 And to her father's court in little space
 Restored anew, she held a higher place ;
 More loved, and more exalted into grace.

This princess, fresh and young, and fair
 and wise,

The worshipped idol of her father's eyes,
 Did all her sex in every grace exceed,
 And had more wit beside than women need.

Youth, health, and ease, and most an
 amorous mind,

To second nuptials had her thoughts in-
 clined :

And former joys had left a secret sting
 behind.

But, prodigal in every other grant,
 Her sire left unsupplied her only want ;
 And she, bextwixt her modesty and pride,
 Her wishes, which she could not help, would
 hide,

Resolved at last to lose no longer time,
 And yet to please herself without a crime,
 She cast her eyes around the court, to find
 A worthy subject suiting to her mind,

* Giovanni (John) Boccaccio, the first famous Italian novelist, was born in Paris in 1313, of Florentine parents. He was the friend of Petrarch, and with him contributed greatly to the revival of learning in Italy. His "Decamerone" contains numbers of lively but often indelicate tales.

To him in holy nuptials to be tied,
A seeming widow, and a secret bride.
Among the train of courtiers, one she found
With all the gifts of bounteous nature
crowned,
Of gentle blood; but one whose niggard
fate

Had set him far below her high estate; 80
Guiscard his name was called, of blooming
age,

Now squire to Tancred, and before his
page :

To him, the choice of all the shining crowd,
Her heart the noble Sigismonda vowed.

Yet hitherto she kept her love concealed,
And with those graces every day beheld
The graceful youth; and every day in-
creased

The raging fires that burned within her
breast ;

Some secret charm did all his acts attend,
And what his fortune wanted, hers could
mend ; 80

Till, as the fire will force its outward way,
Or, in the prison pent, consume the prey ;
So long her earnest eyes on his were set,
At length their twisted rays together met ;
And he, surprised, with humble joy sur-
veyed

One sweet regard, shot by the royal maid :
Not well assured, while doubtful hopes he
nursed,

A second glance came gliding like the first ;
And he, who saw the sharpness of the dart,
Without defence received it in his heart. 70
In public, though their passion wanted
speech,

Yet mutual looks interpreted for each ;
Time, ways, and means of meeting were
denied ;

But all those wants ingenious love supplied.
The inventive god, who never fails his part,
Inspires the wit, when once he warms the
heart.

When Guiscard next was in the circle seen,
Where Sigismonda held the place of queen,
A hollow cane within her hand she brought,
But in the concave had enclosed a note ; 80

With this she seemed to play, and, as in
sport,

Tossed to her love in presence of the court ;
"Take it," she said ; "and when your needs
require,

This little brand will serve to light your
fire."

He took it with a bow, and soon divined
The seeming toy was not for nought
designed :

But when retired, so long with curious eyes
He viewed his present, that he found the
prize.

Much was in little writ ; and all conveyed
With cautious care, for fear to be betrayed 80
By some false confident, or favourite maid.
The time, the place, the manner how to
meet,

Were all in punctual order plainly writ :
But since a trust must be, she thought it
best

To put it out of laymen's power at least ;
And for their solemn vows prepared a
priest.

Guiscard (her secret purpose understood)
With joy prepared to meet the coming
good ;

Nor pains nor danger was resolved to
spare,

But use the means appointed by the fair. 100
Next the proud palace of Salerno stood
A mount of rough ascent, and thick with
wood.

Through this a cave was dug with vast
expense :

The work it seemed of some suspicious
prince,

Who, when abusing power with lawless
might,

From public justice would secure his flight.
The passage made by many a winding way,
Reached even the room in which the tyrant
lay.

Fit for his purpose, on a lower floor,
He lodged, whose issue was an iron door ; 110
From whence, by stairs descending to the
ground,

In the blind grot a safe retreat he found.

Its outlet ended in a brake o'ergrown
With brambles, choked by time, and now
unknown.

A rift there was, which from the mountain's
height

Conveyed a glimmering and malignant
light,

A breathing place to draw the damps
away,

A twilight of an intercepted day.

The tyrant's den, whose use, though lost to
fame,

Was now the apartment of the royal
dame; 120

The cavern only to her father known,
By him was to his darling daughter shown.

Neglected long she let the secret rest,
Till love recalled it to her labouring breast,
And hinted as the way by heaven designed
The teacher, by the means he taught, to
blind.

What will not women do, when need
inspires

Their wit, or love their inclination fires?
Though jealousy of state the invention
found,

Yet love refined upon the former ground. 130
That way, the tyrant had reserved, to fly
Pursuing hate, now served to bring two
lovers nigh.

The dame, who long in vain had kept the
key,

Bold by desire, explored the secret way;
Now tried the stairs, and, wading through
the night,

Searched all the deep recess, and issued
into light.

All this her letter had so well explained,
The instructed youth might compass what
remained;

The cavern's mouth alone was hard to find,
Because the path, disused, was out of
mind: 140

But in what quarter of the copse it lay,
His eye by certain level could survey:

Yet (for the wood perplexed with thorns he
knew)

A frock of leather o'er his limbs he drew;

And thus provided, searched the brake
around,

Till the choked entry of the cave he found.
Thus, all prepared, the promised hour
arrived,

So long expected, and so well contrived:
With love to friend, the impatient lover
went,

Fenced from the thorns, and trod the deep
descent. 150

The conscious priest, who was suborned
before,

Stood ready posted at the postern door;
The maids in distant rooms were sent to
rest,

And nothing wanted but the invited guest.
He came, and knocking thrice without
delay,

The longing lady heard, and turned the key;
At once invaded him with all her charms,
And the first step he made was in her arms:
The leathern outside, boistrous as it was,
Gave way, and bent beneath her strict em-
brace: 160

On either side the kisses flew so thick,
That neither he nor she had breath to speak.
The holy man, amazed at what he saw,
Made haste to sanctify the bliss by law;
And muttered fast the matrimony o'er,
For fear committed sin should get before.
His work performed, he left the pair alone,
Because he knew he could not go too soon,
His presence odious, when his task was
done.

What thoughts he had beseems me not to
say; 170

Though some surmise he went to fast and
pray,

And needed both to drive the tempting
thoughts away.

The foe once gone, they took their full
delight;

'Twas restless rage, and tempest all the
night;

For greedy love each moment would em-
ploy,

And grudged the shortest pauses of their
joy.

Thus were their loves auspiciously begun,
And thus with secret care were carried on.
The stealth itself did appetite restore,
And looked so like a sin, it pleased the
more. 180

The cave was now become a common
way,

The wicket, often opened, knew the key :
Love rioted secure, and long enjoyed,
Was ever eager, and was never cloyed.

But as extremes are short, of ill and
good,

And tides at highest mark regorge their
flood ;

So Fate, that could no more improve their
joy,

Took a malicious pleasure to destroy.

Tancred, who fondly loved, and whose
delight

Was placed in his fair daughter's daily
sight, 190

Of custom, when his state affairs were done,
Would pass his pleasing hours with her
alone ;

And as a father's privilege allowed,
Without attendance of the officious crowd.

It happened once, that when in heat of
day

He tried to sleep, as was his usual way,
The balmy slumber fled his wakeful eyes,
And forced him, in his own despite, to
rise :

Of sleep forsaken, to relieve his care,
He sought the conversation of the fair ; 200
But with her train of damsels she was gone,
In shady walks the scorching heat to shun :
He would not violate that sweet recess,
And found besides a welcome heaviness,
That seized his eyes ; and slumber, which
forgot,

When called before, to come, now came
unsought.

From light retired, behind his daughter's
bed,

He for approaching sleep composed his
head ;

A chair was ready, for that use designed,
So quilted, that he lay at ease reclined ; 210

The curtains closely drawn, the light to
screen,

As if he had contrived to lie unseen :

Thus covered with an artificial night,

Sleep did his office soon, and sealed his
sight.

With Heaven averse, in this ill-omened
hour

Was Guiscard summoned to the secret
bower,

And the fair nymph, with expectation
fired,

From her attending damsels was retired :

For, true to love, she measured time so
right,

As not to miss one moment of delight. 220

The garden, seated on the level floor,

She left behind, and locking every door,

Thought all secure ; but little did she
know,

Blind to her fate, she had enclosed her foe.

Attending Guiscard, in his leathern frock,

Stood ready, with his thrice repeated
knock :

Thrice with a doleful sound the jarring
grate

Rung deaf and hollow, and presaged their
fate.

The door unlocked, to known delight they
haste,

And, panting in each other's arms em-
braced, 230

Rush to the conscious bed, a mutual freight,
And heedless press it with their wonted
weight.

The sudden bound awaked the sleeping
sire,

And showed a sight no parent can desire ;

His opening eyes at once with odious view

The love discovered, and the lover knew :

He would have cried ; but hoping that he
dreamt,

Amazement tied his tongue, and stopped
the attempt.

The ensuing moment all the truth declared,
But now he stood collected, and prepared, 240

For malice and revenge had put him on his
guard. 250

So like a lion that unheeded lay,
 Dissembling sleep, and watchful to betray,
 With inward rage he meditates his prey.
 The thoughtless pair, indulging their desires,
 Alternate, kindled, and then quenched their
 fires ;
 Nor thinking in the shades of death they
 played,
 Full of themselves, themselves alone sur-
 veyed,
 And, too secure, were by themselves be-
 trayed.
 Long time dissolved in pleasure thus they
 lay, 280
 Till nature could no more suffice their play ;
 Then rose the youth, and through the cave
 again
 Returned ; the princess mingled with her
 train.

Resolved his unripe vengeance to defer,
 The royal spy, when now the coast was
 clear,
 Sought not the garden, but retired unseen,
 To brood in secret on his gathered spleen,
 And methodise revenge : to death he
 grieved ;
 And, but he saw the crime, had scarce be-
 lieved.

The appointment for the ensuing night he
 heard ; 280
 And therefore in the cavern had prepared
 Two brawny yeomen of his trusty guard.

Scarce had unwary Guiscard set his foot
 Within the foremost entrance of the grot,
 When these in secret ambush ready lay,
 And rushing on the sudden seized the prey :
 Encumbered with his frock, without de-
 fence,

An easy prize, they led the prisoner thence,
 And, as commanded, brought before the
 prince.

The gloomy sire, too sensible of wrong, 290
 To vent his rage in words, restrained his
 tongue,

And only said, "Thus servants are pre-
 ferred,
 And, trusted, thus their sovereigns they re-
 ward.

Had I not seen, had not these eyes received
 Too clear a proof, I could not have be-
 lieved."

He paused and choked the rest. The
 youth who saw
 His forfeit life abandoned to the law,
 The judge the accuser, and the offence to
 him

Who had both power and will to avenge
 the crime,

No vain defence prepared ; but thus re-
 plied : 290

"The faults of love by love are justified :
 With unresisted might the monarch reigns,
 He levels mountains, and he raises plains ;
 And, not regarding difference of degree,
 Abased your daughter, and exalted me."

This bold return with seeming patience
 heard,

The prisoner was remitted to the guard.
 The sullen tyrant slept not all the night,
 But, lonely walking by a winking light,
 Sobbed, wept, and groaned, and beat his
 withered breast, 290

But would not violate his daughter's rest ;
 Who long expecting lay, for bliss prepared,
 Listening for noise, and grieved that none
 she heard ;

Oft rose, and oft in vain employed the key,
 And oft accused her lover of delay ;
 And passed the tedious hours in anxious
 thoughts away.

The morrow came ; and at his usual hour
 Old Tancred visited his daughter's bower ;
 Her cheek (for such his custom was) he
 kissed,

Then blessed her kneeling, and her maids
 dismissed. 300

The royal dignity thus far maintained,
 Now left in private, he no longer feigned ;
 But all at once his grief and rage appeared,
 And floods of tears ran trickling down his
 beard.

"O Sigismonda," he began to say :
 Thrice he began, and thrice was forced to
 stay,
 Till words, with often trying, found their
 way :

"I thought, O Sigismonda (but how blind
Are parents' eyes, their children's faults to
find !)

Thy virtue, birth, and breeding were
above 310

A mean desire, and vulgar sense of love :
Nor less than sight and hearing could
convince

So fond a father, and so just a prince,
Of such an unforeseen, and unbeliev'd
offence.

Then what indignant sorrow must I have,
To see thee lie subjected to my slave !

A man so smelling of the people's lee,
The court received him first for charity ;

And since with no degree of honour graced,
But only suffered, where he first was
placed : 320

A grovelling insect still ; and so designed
By nature's hand, nor born of noble kind :

A thing, by neither man nor woman prized,
And scarcely known enough to be despised.

To what has Heaven reserv'd my age ?
Ah ! why

Should man, when nature calls, not choose
to die,

Rather than stretch the span of life, to find
Such ills as Fate has wisely cast behind,

For those to feel, whom fond desire to live
Makes covetous of more than life can
give ! 330

Each has his share of good ; and when 'tis
gone,

The guest, though hungry, cannot rise too
soon.

But I, expecting more, in my own wrong
Protracting life, have lived a day too long.

If yesterday could be recalled again,
Even now would I conclude my happy
reign :

But 'tis too late, my glorious race is run,
And a dark cloud o'ertakes my setting
sun.

Hadst thou not loved, or loving saved the
shame,

If not the sin, by some illustrious name, 340
This little comfort had relieved my mind,

'Twas frailty, not unusual to thy kind :

But thy low fall beneath thy royal blood,
Shows downward appetite to mix with
mud :

Thus not the least excuse is left for thee,
Nor the least refuge for unhappy me.

"For him I have resolv'd : whom by
surprise

I took, and scarce can call it, in disguise ;
For such was his attire, as, with intent

Of nature, suited to his mean descent : 350
The harder question yet remains behind,

What pains a parent and a prince can find
To punish an offence of this degenerate
kind.

"As I have loved, and yet I love thee,
more

Than ever father loved a child before ;
So that indulgence draws me to forgive :

Nature, that gave thee life, would have thee
live.

But, as a public parent of the state,
My justice, and thy crime, requires thy
fate.

Fain would I choose a middle course to
steer ; 360

Nature's too kind, and justice too severe :
Speak for us both, and to the balance bring

On either side the father and the king.
Heaven knows, my heart is bent to favour
thee ;

Make it but scanty weight, and leave the
rest to me."

Here stooping with a sigh, he poured a
flood

Of tears, to make his last expression good.
She, who had heard him speak, nor saw
alone

The secret conduct of her love was known,
But he was taken who her soul pos-
sessed, 370

Felt all the pangs of sorrow in her breast :
And little wanted, but a woman's heart,

With cries and tears, had testified her
smart ;

But inborn worth, that fortune can controul,
New strung, and stiffer bent her softer soul ;

The heroine assumed the woman's place,
Confirmed her mind, and fortified her face ;

Why should she beg, or what could she pretend,

When her stern father had condemned her friend?

Her life she might have had; but her despair 380

Of saving his, had put it past her care;
Resolved on fate, she would not lose her breath,

But, rather than not die, solicit death.

Fixed on this thought, she not, as women use,

Her fault by common frailty would excuse;
But boldly justified her innocence,

And, while the fact was owned, denied the offence:

Then with dry eyes, and with an open look,
She met his glance mid-way, and thus undaunted spoke:

"Tancred, I neither am disposed to make 390

Request for life, nor offered life to take;

Much less deny the deed; but least of all
Beneath pretended justice weakly fall.

My words to sacred truth shall be confined,
My deeds shall show the greatness of my mind.

That I have loved, I own; that still I love,
I call to witness all the powers above:

Yet more I own: to Guiscard's love I give

The small remaining time I have to live;

And if beyond this life desire can be, 400

Not Fate itself shall set my passion free.

This first avowed; nor folly warped my mind,

Nor the frail texture of the female kind

Betrayed my virtue: for, too well I knew

What honour was, and honour had his due:

Before the holy priest my vows were tied,
So came I not a strumpet, but a bride.

This for my fame, and for the public voice:

Yet more, his merits justified my choice:

Which had they not, the first election thine, 410

That bond dissolved, the next is freely mine;

Or grant I erred (which yet I must deny),
Had parents power even second vows to tie,

Thy little care to mend my widowed nights,
Has forced me to recourse of marriage rites,

To fill an empty side, and follow known delights.

What have I done in this, deserving blame?

State-laws may alter: nature's are the same;

Those are usurped on helpless woman-kind,

Made without our consent, and wanting power to bind. 420

"Thou, Tancred, better shouldst have understood,

That as thy father gave thee flesh and blood,

So gavest thou me: not from the quarry hewed,

But of a softer mould, with sense endued;
Even softer than thy own, of suppler kind,

More exquisite of taste, and more than man refined.

Nor needst thou by thy daughter to be told,
Though now thy sprightly blood with age be cold.

Thou hast been young: and canst remember still,

That when thou hadst the power, thou hadst the will; 430

And from the past experience of thy fires,
Canst tell with what a tide our strong desires

Come rushing on in youth, and what their rage requires.

"And grant thy youth was exercised in arms,

When love no leisure found for softer charms,

My tender age in luxury was trained,

With idle ease and pageants entertained;

My hours my own, my pleasures unrestrained.

So bred, no wonder if I took the bent

That seemed even warranted by thy appointment, 440

For, when the father is too fondly kind,
Such seed he sows, such harvest shall he find.

Blame then thyself, as reason's law requires,
(Since nature gave, and thou fomentst my fires ;)

If still those appetites continue strong,
Thou mayst consider I am yet but young .
Consider too that, having been a wife,
I must have tasted of a better life,
And am not to be blamed, if I renew
By lawful means the joys which then I knew. 450

Where was the crime, if pleasure I procured,
Young, and a woman, and to bliss inured !
That was my case, and this is my defence :
I pleased myself, I shunned incontinence,
And, urged by strong desires, indulged my sense.

" Left to myself, I must avow, I strove,
From public shame to screen my secret love,
And, well acquainted with thy native pride,
Endeavoured, what I could not help, to hide ;
For which a woman's wit an easy way supplied. 460

How this, so well contrived, so closely laid,
Was known to thee, or by what chance betrayed,
Is not my care ; to please thy pride alone,
I could have wished it had been still unknown.

Nor took I Guiscard by blind fancy led,
Or hasty choice, as many women wed ;
But with deliberate care, and ripened thought,
At leisure first designed, before I wrought :
On him I rested, after long debate,
And not without considering, fixed my fate : 470
His flame was equal, though by mine inspired ;
(For so the difference of our birth required ;)

Had he been born like me, like me his love
Had first begun, what mine was forced to move :

But thus beginning, thus we persevere ;
Our passions yet continue what they were,
Nor length of trial makes our joys the less sincere.

At this my choice, though not by thine allowed

(Thy judgment herding with the common crowd),

Thou takest unjust offence ; and, led by them, 480

Dost less the merit, than the man esteem.
Too sharply, Tancred, by thy pride betrayed,

Hast thou against the laws of kind inveighed :

For all the offence is in opinion placed,
Which deems high birth by lowly choice debased.

This thought alone with fury fires thy breast

(For holy marriage justifies the rest),
That I have sunk the glories of the state,

And mixed my blood with a plebeian mate ;

In which I wonder thou shouldst oversee 490

Superior causes, or impute to me
The fault of Fortune, or the Fates' decree.
Or call it Heaven's imperial power alone,
Which moves on springs of justice, though unknown.

Yet this we see, though ordered for the best,

The bad exalted, and the good oppressed ;
Permitted laurels grace the lawless brow,
The unworthy raised, the worthy cast below.

" But leaving that : search we the secret springs,

And backward trace the principles of things ; 500

There shall we find, that when the world began,

One common mass composed the mould of man ;

One paste of flesh on all degrees bestowed,
And kneaded up alike with moistening blood.

The same almighty Power inspired the
frame

With kindled life, and formed the souls
the same :

The faculties of intellect and will

Dispensed with equal hand, disposed with
equal skill,

Like liberty indulged, with choice of good
or ill.

Thus born alike, from virtue first began 510

The difference that distinguished man from
man :

He claimed no title from descent of blood,

But that which made him noble made
him good :

Warmed with more particles of heavenly
flame,

He winged his upward flight, and soared to
fame ;

The rest remained below, a tribe without
a name.

" This law, though custom now diverts
the course,

As Nature's institute, is yet in force ;

Uncancelled, though disused ; and he,
whose mind

Is virtuous, is alone of noble kind ; 520

Though poor in fortune, of celestial race ;

And he commits the crime who calls him
base.

" Now lay the line ; and measure all thy
court

By inward virtue, not external port ;

And find whom justly to prefer above

The man on whom my judgment placed
my love :

So shalt thou see his parts and person shine ;

And thus compared, the rest a base de-
generate line.

Nor took I, when I first surveyed thy court,

His valour, or his virtues, on report ; 530

But trusted what I ought to trust alone,

Relying on thy eyes, and not my own ;

Thy praise (and thine was then the public
voice)

First recommended Guiscard to my choice :

Directed thus by thee, I looked, and found

A man I thought deserving to be crowned ;

First by my father pointed to my sight,

Nor less conspicuous by his native light ;

His mind, his mien, the features of his
face,

Excelling all the rest of human race : 540

These were thy thoughts, and thou couldst
judge aright,

Till interest made a jaundice in thy sight ;

Or should I grant thou didst not rightly see,

Then thou wert first deceived, and I de-
ceived by thee.

But if thou shalt allege, through pride of
mind,

Thy blood with one of base condition
joined,

'Tis false ; for 'tis not baseness to be poor ;

His poverty augments thy crime the more ;

Upbraids thy justice with the scant regard

Of worth ; whom princes praise, they should
reward. 550

Are these the kings entrusted by the crowd

With wealth, to be dispensed for common
good ?

The people sweat not for their king's de-
light,

To enrich a pimp, or raise a parasite ;

Theirs is the toil ; and he, who well has
served

His country, has his country's wealth de-
served.

Even mighty monarchs oft are meanly
born,

And kings by birth to lowest rank return ;

All subject to the power of giddy chance,

For Fortune can depress, or can ad-
vance : 560

But true nobility is of the mind,

Not given by chance, and not to chance
resigned.

For the remaining doubt of thy decree,

What to resolve, and how dispose of me,

Be warned to cast that useless care aside,

Myself alone will for myself provide.

If in thy doting and decrepit age,

Thy soul, a stranger in thy youth to rage,

Begins in cruel deeds to take delight,

Gorge with my blood thy barbarous
appetite ; 570

For I so little am disposed to pray
 For life, I would not cast a wish away.
 Such as it is, the offence is all my own ;
 And what to Guiscard is already done,
 Or to be done, is doomed by thy decree,
 That, if not executed first by thee,
 Shall on my person be performed by me.
 Away, with women weep, and leave me
 here,

Fixed, like a man, to die without a tear ;
 Or save, or slay us both this present
 hour ; 580
 'Tis all that Fate has left within thy
 power."

She said ; nor did her father fail to find,
 In all she spoke, the greatness of her mind ;
 Yet thought she was not obstinate to die,
 Nor deemed the death she promised was
 so nigh :

Secure in this belief, he left the dame,
 Resolved to spare her life, and save her
 shame ;

But that detested object to remove,
 To wreak his vengeance, and to cure her
 love.

Intent on this, a secret order signed, 590
 The death of Guiscard to his guards en-
 joined ;

Strangling was chosen, and the night the
 time,

A mute revenge, and blind as was the
 crime :

His faithful heart, a bloody sacrifice,
 Torn from his breast, to glut the tyrant's
 eyes,

Closed the severe command : for (slaves to
 pay)

What kings decree, the soldier must obey ;
 Waged against foes ; and when the wars
 are o'er,

Fit only to maintain despotic power :
 Dangerous to freedom, and desired
 alone 600

By kings who seek an arbitrary throne.
 Such were these guards ; as ready to have
 slain

The prince himself, allured with greater
 gain ;

So was the charge performed with better
 will,

By men inured to blood, and exercised in ill.
 Now, though the sullen sire had eased
 his mind,

The pomp of his revenge was yet behind,
 A pomp prepared to grace the present he
 designed,

A goblet rich with gems, and rough with
 gold,

Of depth, and breadth, the precious pledge
 to hold, 610

With cruel care he chose : the hollow part
 Enclosed, the lid concealed, the lover's
 heart :

Then of his trusted mischiefs one he sent,
 And bade him with these words the gift
 present :

" Thy father sends thee this to cheer thy
 breast,

And glad thy sight with what thou lovest
 the best ;

As thou hast pleased his eyes, and joyed
 his mind,

With what he loved the most of human
 kind."

Ere this the royal dame, who well had
 weighed

The consequence of what her sire had
 said, 620

Fixed on her fate, against the expected
 hour,

Procured the means to have it in her
 power ;

For this, she had distilled with early care
 The juice of simples friendly to despair,

A magazine of death, and thus prepared,
 Secure to die, the fatal message heard :

Then smiled severe ; nor with a troubled
 look,

Or trembling hand the funeral present took :
 Even kept her countenance, when the lid
 removed

Disclosed the heart, unfortunately loved ; 630
 She needed not be told, within whose
 breast

It lodged ; the message had explained the
 rest.

Or not amazed, or hiding her surprise,
 She sternly on the bearer fixed her eyes :
 Then thus : " Tell Tancred, on his daughter's
 part,
 The gold, though precious, equals not the
 heart :
 But he did well to give his best ; and I,
 Who wished a worthier urn, forgive his
 poverty."

At this she curbed a groan, that else had
 come,
 And, pausing, viewed the present in the
 tomb ; 640

Then to the heart adored devoutly glued
 Her lips, and raising it, her speech re-
 newed :

" Even from my day of birth, to this, the
 bound

Of my unhappy being, I have found
 My father's care and tenderness expressed ;
 But this last act of love excels the rest :
 For this so dear a present, bear him back
 The best return that I can live to make."

The messenger despatched, again she
 viewed

The loved remains, and sighing thus pur-
 sued : 650

" Source of my life, and lord of my desires,
 In whom I lived, with whom my soul
 expires,

Poor heart, no more the spring of vital heat,
 Cursed be the hands that tore thee from
 thy seat !

The course is finished which thy fates
 decreed,

And thou from thy corporeal prison freed :
 Soon hast thou reached the goal with
 mended pace,

A world of woes despatched in little space.
 Forced by thy worth, thy foe, in death
 become

Thy friend, has lodged thee in a costly
 tomb. 660

There yet remained thy funeral exequies,
 The weeping tribute of thy widow's eyes,
 And those, indulgent Heaven has found
 the way

That I, before my death, have leave to pay.

My father even in cruelty is kind,
 Or Heaven has turned the malice of his
 mind

To better uses than his hate designed ;
 And made the insult, which in his gift
 appears,

The means to mourn thee with my pious
 tears ;

Which I will pay thee down, before I go, 670
 And save myself the pains to weep below,
 If souls can weep. Though once I meant
 to meet

My fate with face unmoved, and eyes
 unwet,

Yet since I have thee here in narrow room,
 My tears shall set thee first afloat within
 thy tomb :

Then (as I know thy spirit hovers nigh)
 Under thy friendly conduct will I fly
 To regions unexplored, secure to share
 Thy state ; nor hell shall punishment
 appear ;

And heaven is double heaven, if thou art
 there." 680

She said : her brimful eyes, that ready
 stood,

And only wanted will to keep a flood,
 Released their watery store, and poured
 amain,

Like clouds low hung, a sober shower of
 rain ;

Mute solemn sorrow, free from female noise,
 Such as the majesty of grief destroys ;
 For, bending o'er the cup, the tears she
 shed

Seemed by the posture to discharge her
 head,
 O'er-filled before ; and (oft her mouth
 applied

To the cold heart,) she kissed at once, and
 cried. 690

Her maids, who stood amazed, nor knew
 the cause

Of her complaining, nor whose heart it
 was ;

Yet all due measures of her mourning kept,
 Did office at the dirge, and by infection
 wept ;

And oft inquired the occasion of her grief,
(Unanswered but by sighs) and offered vain relief.

At length, her stock of tears already shed,
She wiped her eyes, she raised her drooping head,

And thus pursued : " Oh ever faithful heart,
I have performed the ceremonial part, 700
The decencies of grief ; it rests behind,
That, as our bodies were, our souls be joined ;
To thy whate'er abode my shade convey,
And as an elder ghost, direct the way."
She said ; and bade the vial to be brought,
Where she before had brewed the deadly draught :

First pouring out the medicable bane,
The heart, her tears had rinsed, she bathed again ;

Then down her throat the death securely throws,

And quaffs a long oblivion of her woes. 710
This done, she mounts the genial bed,
and there

(Her body first composed with honest care)
Attends the welcome rest ; her hands yet hold

Close to her heart the monumental gold ;
Nor farther word she spoke, but closed her sight,

And quiet sought the covert of the night.
The damsels, who the while in silence mourned,

Not knowing, nor suspecting death suborned,
Yet, as their duty was, to Tancred sent :
Who, conscious of the occasion, feared the event. 720

Alarmed, and with presaging heart, he came,

And drew the curtains, and exposed the dame

To loathsome light : then with a late relief
Made vain efforts to mitigate her grief.

She, what she could, excluding day, her eyes
Kept firmly sealed, and sternly thus replies :

" Tancred, restrain thy tears, unsought by me,

And sorrow unavailing now to thee :

Did ever man before afflict his mind
To see the effect of what himself designed ? 730

Yet, if thou hast remaining in thy heart
Some sense of love, some unextinguished part

Of former kindness, largely once professed,
Let me by that adjure thy hardened breast
Not to deny thy daughter's last request :
The secret love which I so long enjoyed,
And still concealed to gratify thy pride,
Thou hast disjoined ; but, with my dying breath,

Seek not, I beg thee, to disjoin our death ;
Where'er his corpse by thy command is laid, 740

Thither let mine in public be conveyed ;
Exposed in open view, and side by side,
Acknowledged as a bridegroom and a bride."

The prince's anguish hindered his reply :
And she, who felt her fate approaching nigh,

Seized the cold heart, and heaving to her breast,

" Here, precious pledge," she said, " securely rest."

These accents were her last ; the creeping death

Benumbed her senses first, then stopped her breath.

Thus she for disobedience justly died : 750
The sire was justly punished for his pride :
The youth, least guilty, suffered for the offence

Of duty violated to his prince ;
Who, late repenting of his cruel deed,
One common sepulchre for both decreed ;
Entombed the wretched pair in royal state,
And on their monument inscribed their fate.

THEODORE AND HONORIA.

Of all the cities in Romanian lands,
 The chief, and most renowned, Ravenna
 stands,
 Adorned in ancient times with arms and
 arts,
 And rich inhabitants, with generous hearts.
 But Theodore the brave, above the rest,
 With gifts of fortune and of nature blessed,
 The foremost place for wealth and honour
 held,
 And all in feats of chivalry excelled.

This noble youth to madness loved a
 dame
 Of high degree, Honoria was her name; 10
 Fair as the fairest, but of haughty mind,
 And fiercer than became so soft a kind;
 Proud of her birth; (for equal she had
 none;)

The rest she scorned; but hated him alone;
 His gifts, his constant courtship, nothing
 gained;

For she, the more he loved, the more dis-
 dained.

He lived with all the pomp he could devise,
 At tilts and tournaments obtained the prize;
 But found no favour in his lady's eyes:

Relentless as a rock, the lofty maid 20
 Turned all to poison that he did or said:
 Nor prayers, nor tears, nor offered vows,
 could move;

The work went backward; and, the more
 he strove

To advance his suit, the farther from her
 love.

Wearied at length, and wanting remedy,
 He doubted oft, and oft resolved to die.
 But pride stood ready to prevent the blow,
 For who would die to gratify a foe?

His generous mind disdained so mean a
 fate;

That passed, his next endeavour was to
 hate. 30

But vainer that relief than all the rest,
 The less he hoped, with more desire pos-
 sessed;
 Love stood the siege, and would not yield
 his breast.

Change was the next, but change deceived
 his care;

He sought a fairer, but found none so fair.
 He would have worn her out by slow
 degrees,

As men by fasting starve the untamed dis-
 ease:

But present love required a present ease.
 Looking he feeds alone his famished eyes,
 Feeds lingering death, but looking not he
 dies. 40

Yet still he chose the longest way to fate,
 Wasting at once his life and his estate.

His friends beheld, and pitied him in vain,
 For what advice can ease a lover's pain?
 Absence, the best expedient they could find,
 Might save the fortune, if not cure the mind:
 This means they long proposed, but little
 gained,

Yet after much pursuit, at length obtained.

Hard you may think it was to give con-
 sent,

But struggling with his own desires he
 went, 50

With large expense, and with a pompous
 train,

Provided as to visit France and Spain,
 Or for some distant voyage o'er the main.

But love had clipped his wings, and cut
 him short,

Confined within the purview of the court.
 Three miles he went, nor farther could re-
 treat;

His travels ended at his country-seat:

To Chassis' pleasing plains he took his way,
 There pitched his tents, and there resolved
 to stay.

The spring was in the prime; the neighbouring grove 60

Supplied with birds, the choristers of love,
Music unbought, that ministered delight
To morning walks, and lulled his cares by night;

There he discharged his friends; but not the expense

Of frequent treats, and proud magnificence.

He lived as kings retire, though more at large

From public business, yet with equal charge;
With house and heart still open to receive;
As well content as love would give him leave:
He would have lived more free; but many a guest, 70

Who could forsake the friend, pursued the feast.

It happened one morning, as his fancy led,
Before his usual hour he left his bed,
To walk within a lonely lawn, that stood
On every side surrounded by a wood:
Alone he walked, to please his pensive mind,
And sought the deepest solitude to find;
'Twas in a grove of spreading pines he strayed;

The winds within the quivering branches played,

And dancing trees a mournful music made. 80

The place itself was suiting to his care,
Uncouth and savage, as the cruel fair.

He wandered on, unknowing where he went,
Lost in the wood, and all on love intent:
The day already half his race had run,
And summoned him to due repast at noon;
But love could feel no hunger but his own.

Whilst listening to the murmuring leaves he stood,

More than a mile immersed within the wood,
At once the wind was laid; the whispering sound 90

Was dumb; a rising earthquake rocked the ground;

With deeper brown the grove was over-spread;

A sudden horror seized his giddy head,
And his ears tinkled, and his colour fled;

Nature was in alarm; some danger nigh
Seemed threatened, though unseen to mortal eye.

Unused to fear, he summoned all his soul,
And stood collected in himself, and whole:
Not long: for soon a whirlwind rose around,
And from afar he heard a screaming sound, 100

As of a dame distressed, who cried for aid,
And filled with loud laments the secret shade.

A thicket close beside the grove there stood,

With briars and brambles choked, and dwarfish wood;

From thence the noise, which now approaching near,

With more distinguished notes invades his ear;

He raised his head, and saw a beautiful maid,

With hair dishevelled, issuing through the shade;

Stripped of her clothes, and even those parts revealed,

Which modest nature keeps from sight concealed. 110

Her face, her hands, her naked limbs were torn,

With passing through the brakes and prickly thorn;

Two mastiffs gaunt and grim her flight pursued,

And oft their fastened fangs in blood imbrued;

Oft they came up, and pinched her tender side,

"Mercy, O mercy, Heaven!" she ran, and cried;

When Heaven was named, they loosed their hold again,

Then sprang she forth, they followed her again.

Not far behind, a knight of swarthy face,
High on a coal-black steed pursued the chase: 120

With flashing flames his ardent eyes were filled,

And in his hand a naked sword he held;

He cheered the dogs to follow her who fled,
 And vowed revenge on her devoted head.
 As Theodore was born of noble kind,
 The brutal action roused his manly mind;
 Moved with unworthy usage of the maid,
 He, though unarmed, resolved to give her
 aid.
 A sapling pine he wrenched from out the
 ground,
 The readiest weapon that his fury found. 130
 Thus furnished for offence, he crossed the
 way
 Betwixt the graceless villain and his prey.
 The knight came thundering on, but,
 from afar,
 Thus in imperious tone forbade the war :
 " Cease, Theodore, to proffer vain relief,
 Nor stop the vengeance of so just a grief;
 But give me leave to seize my destined
 prey,
 And let eternal justice take the way :
 I but revenge my fate, disdained, betrayed,
 And suffering death for this ungrateful
 maid." 140
 He said, at once dismounting from the
 steed ;
 For now the hell-hounds, with superior
 speed,
 Had reached the dame, and fastening on
 her side,
 The ground with issuing streams of purple
 dyed.
 Stood Theodore surprised in deadly fright,
 With chattering teeth, and bristling hair
 upright ;
 Yet armed with inborn worth, " Whate'er,"
 said he,
 " Thou art, who knowst me better than I
 thee ;
 Or prove thy rightful cause, or be defied."
 The spectre, fiercely staring, thus replied : 150
 " Know, Theodore, thy ancestry I claim,
 And Guido Cavalcanti was my name.
 One common sire our fathers did beget,
 My name and story some remember yet :
 Thee, then a boy, within my arms I laid,
 When for my sins I loved this haughty
 maid ;

Not less adored in life, nor served by me,
 Than proud Honoria now is loved by thee.
 What did I not her stubborn heart to
 gain ?
 But all my vows were answered with dis-
 dain : 160
 She scorned my sorrows, and despised my
 pain,
 Long time I dragged my days in fruitless
 care ;
 Then loathing life, and plunged in deep
 despair,
 To finish my unhappy life, I fell
 On this sharp sword, and now am damned
 in hell.
 " Short was her joy ; for soon the insult-
 ing maid,
 By Heaven's decree, in the cold grave was
 laid.
 And, as in unrepented sin she died,
 Doomed to the same bad place, is punished
 for her pride ;
 Because she deemed I well deserved to
 die, 170
 And made a merit of her cruelty.
 There, then, we met ; both tried, and both
 were cast,
 And this irrevocable sentence passed :
 That she, whom I so long pursued in vain,
 Should suffer from my hands a lingering
 pain :
 Renewed to life that she might daily die,
 I daily doomed to follow, she to fly ;
 No more a lover, but a mortal foe,
 I seek her life (for love is none below) :
 As often as my dogs with better speed 180
 Arrest her flight, is she to death decreed :
 Then with this fatal sword, on which I
 died,
 I pierce her opened back, or tender side,
 And tear that hardened heart from out her
 breast,
 Which, with her entrails, makes my hungry
 hounds a feast.
 Nor lies she long, but as her fates ordain,
 Springs up to life, and fresh to second
 pain,
 Is saved to-day, to-morrow to be slain."

This, versed in death, the infernal knight
 relates,
 And then for proof fulfilled the common
 fates ; 190
 Her heart and bowels through her back he
 drew,
 And fed the hounds that helped him to pur-
 sue.
 Stern looked the fiend, as frustrate of his
 will,
 Not half sufficed, and greedy yet to kill.
 And now the soul, expiring through the
 wound,
 Had left the body breathless on the ground,
 When thus the grisly spectre spoke again :
 " Behold the fruit of ill-rewarded pain :
 As many months as I sustained her hate,
 So many years is she condemned by fate 200
 To daily death ; and every several place
 Conscious of her disdain, and my disgrace,
 Must witness her just punishment ; and be
 A scene of triumph and revenge to me.
 As in this grove I took my last farewell,
 As on this very spot of earth I fell,
 As Friday saw me die, so she my prey
 Becomes even here, on this revolving day."
 Thus while he spoke, the virgin from the
 ground
 Upstarted fresh, already closed the
 wound, 210
 And, unconcerned for all she felt before,
 Precipitates her flight along the shore :
 The hell-hounds, as ungorged with flesh
 and blood,
 Pursue their prey, and seek their wonted
 food :
 The fiend remounts his courser, mends his
 pace,
 And all the vision vanished from the place.
 Long stood the noble youth oppressed
 with awe,
 And stupid at the wondrous things he saw,
 Surpassing common faith, transgressing
 Nature's law :
 He would have been asleep, and wished to
 wake ; 220
 But dreams, he knew, no long impression
 make,

Though strong at first ; if vision, to what end,
 But such as must his future state portend ?
 His love the damsel, and himself the fiend.
 But yet reflecting that it could not be
 From Heaven, which cannot impious acts
 decree,
 Resolved within himself to shun the snare,
 Which hell for his destruction did prepare ;
 And as his better genius should direct,
 From an ill cause to draw a good effect. 230
 Inspired from Heaven, he homeward
 took his way,
 Nor palled his new design with long delay :
 But of his train a trusty servant sent,
 To call his friends together at his tent.
 They came, and usual salutations paid,
 With words premeditated thus he said :
 " What you have often counselled, to
 remove
 My vain pursuit of unregarded love,
 By thrift my sinking fortune to repair,
 Though late, yet is at last become my
 care : 240
 My heart shall be my own ; my vast
 expense
 Reduced to bounds, by timely providence ;
 This only I require ; invite for me
 Honoria, with her father's family,
 Her friends, and mine ; the cause I shall
 display,
 On Friday next ; for that's the appointed
 day."
 Well pleased were all his friends ; the task
 was light ;
 The father, mother, daughter, they invite ;
 Hardly the dame was drawn to this
 repast ;
 But yet resolved, because it was the
 last. 250
 The day was come, the guests invited came,
 And, with the rest, the inexorable dame :
 A feast prepared with riotous expense,
 Much cost, more care, and most magni-
 ficence.
 The place ordained was in that haunted
 grove,
 Where the revenging ghost pursued his
 love :

The tables in a proud pavilion spread,
 With flowers below, and tissue overhead :
 The rest in rank, Honoria chief in place,
 Was artfully contrived to set her face 280
 To front the thicket, and behold the chase.
 The feast was served, the time so well fore-
 cast,
 That just when the dessert and fruits were
 placed,

The fiend's alarm began ; the hollow sound
 Sung in the leaves, the forest shook around,
 Air blackened, rolled the thunder, groaned
 the ground.

Nor long before the loud laments arise
 Of one distressed, and mastiffs mingled
 cries ;
 And first the dame came rushing through
 the wood,
 And next the famished hounds that sought
 their food, 270
 And griped her flanks, and oft essayed their
 jaws in blood.

Last came the felon, on his sable steed,
 Armed with his naked sword, and urged his
 dogs to speed.
 She ran, and cried, her flight directly
 bent,

(A guest unbidden) to the fatal tent,
 The scene of death, and place ordained for
 punishment.

Loud was the noise, aghast was every
 guest,

The women shrieked, the men forsook the
 feast ;

The hounds at nearer distance hoarsely
 bayed ;

The hunter close pursued the visionary
 maid ; 280

She rent the heaven with loud laments, im-
 ploring aid.

The gallants, to protect the lady's right,
 Their fauchions brandished at the grisly
 spright ;

High on his stirrups he provoked the
 fight.

Then, on the crowd he cast a furious look,
 And withered all their strength before he
 strook :

" Back, on your lives ! let be," said he,
 " my prey,
 And let my vengeance take the destined
 way :

Vain are your arms, and vainer your de-
 fence,
 Against the eternal doom of Providence : 290
 Mine is the ungrateful maid by Heaven
 designed :

Mercy she would not give, nor mercy shall
 she find."

At this the former tale again he told
 With thundering tone, and dreadful to
 behold :

Sunk were their hearts with horror of the
 crime,

Nor needed to be warned a second time,
 But bore each other back : some knew the
 face,

And all had heard the much-lamented case
 Of him who fell for love, and this the fatal
 place.

And now the infernal minister ad-
 vanced, 300

Seized the due victim, and with fury lanced
 Her back, and piercing through her inmost
 heart,

Drew backward as before the offending
 part.

The reeking entrails next he tore away,
 And to his meagre mastiffs made a prey.

The pale assistants on each other stared,
 With gaping mouths for issuing words
 prepared ;

The still-born sounds upon the palate hung,
 And died imperfect on the faltering tongue.

The fright was general ; but the female
 band 310

(A helpless train) in mere confusion stand :
 With horror shuddering, on a heap they run,
 Sick at the sight of hateful justice done ;
 For conscience rung the alarm, and made
 the case their own.

So spread upon a lake, with upward eye,
 A plump of fowl behold their foe on high ;
 They close their trembling troop ; and all
 attend

On whom the sousing eagle will descend.

But most the proud Honoria feared the event,
 And thought to her alone the vision sent. 320
 Her guilt presents to her distracted mind
 Heaven's justice, Theodore's revengeful kind,
 And the same fate to the same sin assigned ;
 Already sees herself the monster's prey,
 And feels her heart and entrails torn away.
 'Twas a mute scene of sorrow, mixed with fear ;
 Still on the table lay the unfinished cheer :
 The knight and hungry mastiffs stood around,
 The mangled dame lay breathless on the ground ;
 When on a sudden, reinspired with breath,
 Again she rose, again to suffer death ; 330
 Nor stayed the hell-hounds, nor the hunter stayed,
 But followed, as before, the flying maid :
 The avenger took from earth the avenging sword,
 And mounting light as air his sable steed he spurred :
 The clouds dispelled, the sky resumed her light,
 And Nature stood recovered of her fright.
 But fear, the last of ills, remained behind,
 And horror heavy sat on every mind. 340
 Nor Theodore encouraged more the feast,
 But sternly looked, as hatching in his breast
 Some deep designs ; which when Honoria viewed,
 The fresh impulse her former fright renewed :
 She thought herself the trembling dame who fled,
 And him the grisly ghost that spurred the infernal steed :
 The more dismayed, for when the guests withdrew,
 Their courteous host saluting all the crew,
 Regardless passed her o'er, nor graced with kind adieu,
 That sting infixed within her haughty mind,
 The downfall of her empire she divined ; 350
 And her proud heart with secret sorrow pined.
 Home as they went, the sad discourse renewed,
 Of the relentless dame to death pursued,
 And of the sight obscene so lately viewed.
 None durst arraign the righteous doom she bore ;
 Even they who pitied most, yet blamed her more :
 The parallel they needed not to name,
 But in the dead they damned the living dame,
 At every little noise she looked behind,
 For still the knight was present to her mind : 360
 And anxious oft she started on the way,
 And thought the horseman ghost came thundering for his prey.
 Returned she took her bed with little rest,
 But in short slumbers dreamt the funeral feast :
 Awaked, she turned her side, and slept again ;
 The same black vapours mounted in her brain,
 And the same dreams returned with double pain.
 Now forced to wake, because afraid to sleep,
 Her blood all fevered, with a furious leap
 She sprung from bed, distracted in her mind, 370
 And feared, at every step, a twitching spright behind.
 Darkling and desperate, with a staggering pace,
 Of death afraid, and conscious of disgrace ;
 Fear, pride, remorse, at once her heart assailed,
 Pride put remorse to flight, but fear prevailed.
 Friday, the fatal day, when next it came,
 Her soul forethought the fiend would change his game,

And her pursue, or Theodore be slain,
And two ghosts join their packs to hunt her
o'er the plain.

This dreadful image so possessed her
mind, 380

That desperate any succour else to find,
She ceased all farther hope; and now
began

To make reflection on the unhappy man.
Rich, brave, and young, who past expres-
sion loved,

Proof to disdain, and not to be removed :
Of all the men respected and admired,
Of all the dames, except herself, desired :
Why not of her? preferred above the rest
By him with knightly deeds, and open love
professed?

So had another been, where he his vows
addressed. 390

This quelled her pride, yet other doubts
remained,

That once disdain, she might be dis-
dained.

The fear was just, but greater fear pre-
vailed,

Fear of her life by hellish hounds assailed :
He took a lowering leave; but who can
tell

What outward hate might inward love
conceal?

Her sex's arts she knew, and why not,
then,

Might deep dissembling have a place in
men?

Here hope began to dawn; resolved to try,
She fixed on this her utmost remedy; 400
Death was behind, but hard it was to die.

'Twas time enough at last on death to call,
The precipice in sight: a shrub was all

That kindly stood betwixt to break the
fatal fall.

One maid she had beloved above the
rest;

Secure of her, the secret she confessed;
And now the cheerful light her fears dis-
pelled,

She with no winding turns the truth con-
cealed,

But put the woman off, and stood revealed :
With faults confessed commissioned her
to go, 410

If pity yet had place, and reconcile her
foe;

The welcome message made, was soon
received;

'Twas to be wished, and hoped, but scarce
believed;

Fate seemed a fair occasion to present,
He knew the sex, and feared she might
repent,

Should he delay the moment of consent.
There yet remained to gain her friends (a
care

The modesty of maidens well might spare);
But she with such a zeal the cause em-
braced,

(As women, where they will, are all in
haste,) 420

The father, mother, and the kin beside,
Were overborne by fury of the tide;

With full consent of all, she changed her
state;

Resistless in her love, as in her hate.
By her example warned, the rest beware;

More easy, less imperious, were the fair;
And that one hunting, which the devil
designed

For one fair female, lost him half the kind.

CYMON AND IPHIGENIA.

Poeta loquitur.

OLD as I am, for ladies' love unfit,
 The power of beauty I remember yet,
 Which once inflamed my soul, and still
 inspires my wit.
 If love be folly, the severe divine
 Has felt that folly, though he censures
 mine ;
 Pollutes the pleasures of a chaste embrace,
 Acts what I write, and propagates in grace,
 With riotous excess, a priestly race.
 Suppose him free, and that I forge the
 offence,
 He showed the way, perverting first my
 sense : 10
 In malice witty, and with venom fraught,
 He makes me speak the things I never
 thought.
 Compute the gains of his ungoverned zeal ;
 Ill suits his cloth the praise of railing well.
 The world will think that what we loosely
 write,
 Though now arraigned, he read with some
 delight ;
 Because he seems to chew the cud again,
 When his broad comment makes the text
 too plain ;
 And teaches more in one explaining page,
 Than all the double meanings of the
 stage. 20
 What needs he paraphrase on what we
 mean ?
 We were at worst but wanton ; he's
 obscene.
 I, nor my fellows, nor myself excuse ;
 But love's the subject of the comic muse :
 Nor can we write without it, nor would
 you
 A tale of only dry instruction view,
 Nor love is always of a vicious kind,
 But oft to virtuous acts inflames the mind,

Awakes the sleepy vigour of the soul,
 And, brushing o'er, adds motion to the
 pool. 30
 Love, studious how to please, improves
 our parts
 With polished manners, and adorns with
 arts.
 Love first invented verse, and formed the
 rhyme,
 The motion measured, harmonised the
 chime ;
 To liberal acts enlarged the narrow-souled,
 Softened the fierce, and made the coward
 bold :
 The world, when waste, he peopled with
 increase,
 And warring nations reconciled in peace.
 Ormond, the first, and all the fair may find,
 In this one legend, to their fame de-
 signed, 40
 When beauty fires the blood, how love
 exalts the mind.

IN that sweet isle where Venus keeps her
 court,
 And every gracc, and all the loves, resort ;
 Where either sex is formed of softer earth,
 And takes the bent of pleasure from their
 birth ;
 There lived a Cyprian lord, above the rest
 Wise, wealthy, with a numerous issue
 blessed ;
 But, as no gift of fortune is sincere,
 Was only wanting in a worthy heir :
 His eldest born, a goodly youth to view, 50
 Excelled the rest in shape and outward
 show,
 Fair, tall, his limbs with due proportion
 joined,
 But of a heavy, dull, degenerate mind.

His soul belied the features of his face ;
 Beauty was there, but beauty in disgrace.
 A clownish mien, a voice with rustic sound,
 And stupid eyes that ever loved the ground.
 He looked like Nature's error, as the mind
 And body were not of a piece designed,
 But made for two, and by mistake in one
 were joined. 60

The ruling rod, the father's forming care,
 Were exercised in vain on wit's despair ;
 The more informed, the less he understood,
 And deeper sunk by floundering in the mud.
 Now scorned of all, and grown the public
 shame,

The people from Galesus changed his
 name.

And Cymon called, which signifies a brute ;
 So well his name did with his nature suit.

His father, when he found his labour
 lost,

And care employed, that answered not the
 cost, 70

Chose an ungrateful object to remove,
 And loathed to see what nature made him
 love ;

So to his country farm the fool confined ;
 Rude work well suited with a rustic mind.
 Thus to the wilds the sturdy Cymon went,
 A squire among the swains, and pleased
 with banishment.

His corn and cattle were his only care,
 And his supreme delight, a country fair.

It happened on a summer's holiday,
 That to the green-wood shade he took his
 way ; 80

For Cymon shunned the church, and used
 not much to pray.

His quarter-staff, which he could ne'er for-
 sake,

Hung half before, and half behind his back.
 He trudged along, unknowing what he
 sought,

And whistled as he went, for want of
 thought.

By chance conducted, or by thirst con-
 strained,

The deep recesses of the grove he gained ;
 Where in a plain defended by the wood,

Crept through the matted grass a crystal
 flood,

By which an alabaster fountain stood : 90
 And on the margin of the fount was laid
 (Attended by her slaves) a sleeping maid.
 Like Dian and her nymphs, when, tired
 with sport,

To rest by cool Eurotas they resort :
 The dame herself the goddess well ex-
 pressed,

Not more distinguished by her purple vest,
 Than by the charming features of her face,
 And, even in slumber, a superior grace :

Her comely limbs composed with decent
 care,

Her body shaded with a slight cymar ; 100
 Her bosom to the view was only bare :

Where two beginning paps were scarcely
 spied,

For yet their places were but signified :
 The fanning wind upon her bosom blows,
 To meet the fanning wind the bosom rose ;
 The fanning wind, and purling streams,
 continue her repose.

The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes,
 And gaping mouth, that testified surprise,
 Fixed on her face, nor could remove his
 sight,

New as he was to love, and novice to
 delight : 110

Long mute he stood, and leaning on his
 staff,

His wonder witnessed with an idiot laugh ;
 Then would have spoke, but by his glim-
 mering sense

First found his want of words, and feared
 offence :

Doubted for what he was he should be
 known,

By his clown accent, and his country tone.
 Through the rude chaos thus the running
 light

Shot the first ray that pierced the native
 night :

Then day and darkness in the mass were
 mixed,

Till gathered in a globe the beams were
 fixed : 120

Last shone the sun, who, radiant in his sphere,
Illumed heaven and earth, and rolled
around the year.

So reason in this brutal soul began :
Love made him first suspect he was a man ;
Love made him doubt his broad barbarian
sound ;
By love his want of words, and wit, he
found ;

That sense of want prepared the future way
To knowledge, and disclosed the promise
of a day.

What not his father's care, nor tutor's art,
Could plant with pains in his unpolished
heart, 180

The best instructor, Love, at once inspired,
As barren grounds to fruitfulness are fired :
Love taught him shame, and shame, with
love at strife,

Soon taught the sweet civilities of life ;
His gross material soul at once could find
Somewhat in her excelling all her kind ;
Exciting a desire till then unknown,
Somewhat unfound, or found in her alone.
This made the first impression on his mind.
Above, but just above, the brutal kind. 140
For beasts can like, but not distinguish too,
Nor their own liking by reflection know ;
Nor why they like or this or t'other face,
Or judge of this or that peculiar grace ;
But love in gross, and stupidly admire :
As flies, allured by light, approach the fire.
Thus our man-beast, advancing by degrees,
First likes the whole, then separates what
he sees ;

On several parts a several praise bestows,
The ruby lips, the well-proportioned nose, 150
The snowy skin, and raven-glossy hair,
The dimpled cheek, and forehead rising
fair,

And even in sleep itself, a smiling air.
From thence his eyes descending viewed
the rest,

Her plump round arms, white hands, and
heaving breast,

Long on the last he dwelt, though every part
A pointed arrow sped to pierce his heart.

Thus in a trice a judge of beauty grown,
(A judge erected from a country clown)

He longed to see her eyes, in slumber
hid, 180

And wished his own could pierce within
the lid :

He would have waked her, but restrained
his thought,

And love new-born the first good manners
taught.

An awful fear his ardent wish withstood,
Nor durst disturb the goddess of the wood.
For such she seemed by her celestial face,
Excelling all the rest of human race :

And things divine, by common sense he
knew,

Must be devoutly seen, at distant view :
So checking his desire, with trembling
heart 170

Gazing he stood, nor would nor could
depart ;

Fixed as a pilgrim wildered in his way,
Who dares not stir by night, for fear to
stray,

But stands with awful eyes to watch the
dawn of day.

At length awaking, Iphigene the fair,
(So was the beauty called, who caused his
care,)

Unclosed her eyes, and double day re-
vealed,

While those of all her slaves in sleep were
sealed.

The slaving cudden, propped upon his
staff,

Stood ready gaping with a grinning
laugh, 180

To welcome her awake, nor durst begin
To speak, but wisely kept the fool within.

Then she : "What make you, Cymon,
here alone?"

(For Cymon's name was round the country
known,

Because descended of a noble race,
And for a soul ill sorted with his face.)

But still the sot stood silent with sur-
prise,

With fixed regard on her new-opened eyes,

And in his breast received the envenomed
dart,

A tickling pain that pleased amid the
smart. 190

But conscious of her form, with quick dis-
trust

She saw his sparkling eyes, and feared his
brutal lust.

This to prevent, she waked her sleepy
crew,

And rising hasty, took a short adieu.

Then Cymon first his rustic voice
essayed,

With proffered service to the parting maid
To see her safe ; his hand she long denied,

But took at length, ashamed of such a
guide.

So Cymon led her home, and leaving there,
No more would to his country clowns re-
pair, 200

But sought his father's house, with better
mind,

Refusing in the farm to be confined.

The father wondered at the son's return,
And knew not whether to rejoice or mourn ;
But doubtfully received, expecting still
To learn the secret causes of his altered
will.

Nor was he long delayed : the first request
He made, was like his brothers to be
dressed,

And, as his birth required, above the rest.
With ease his suit was granted by his
sire, 210

Distinguishing his heir by rich attire ;
His body thus adorned, he next designed
With liberal arts to cultivate his mind :
He sought a tutor of his own accord,
And studied lessons he before abhorred.

Thus the man-child advanced, and
learned so fast,

That in short time his equals he surpassed :
His brutal manners from his breast exiled,
His mien he fashioned, and his tongue he
filed ;

In every exercise of all admired, 220
He seemed, nor only seemed, but was in-
spired ;

Inspired by love, whose business is to
please ;

He rode, he fenced, he moved with grace-
ful ease,

More famed for sense, for courtly carriage
more,

Than for his brutal folly known before.

What then of altered Cymon shall we
say,

But that the fire which choked in ashes lay,
A load too heavy for his soul to move,
Was upward blown below, and brushed
away by love.

Love made an active progress through his
mind, 230

The dusky parts he cleared, the gross re-
fined,

The drowsy waked ; and, as he went, im-
pressed

The Maker's image on the human breast.

Thus was the man amended by desire,
And though he loved perhaps with too
much fire,

His father all his faults with reason
scanned,

And liked an error of the better hand ;
Excused the excess of passion in his mind,
By flames too fierce, perhaps too much
refined :

So Cymon, since his sire indulged his
will, 240

Impetuous loved, and would be Cymon
still ;

Galesus he disowned, and chose to bear
The name of fool, confirmed and bishoped
by the fair.

To Cipseus by his friends his suit he
moved,

Cipseus the father of the fair he loved :
But he was pre-engaged by former ties,
While Cymon was endeavouring to be
wise :

And Iphigene, obliged by former vows,
Had given her faith to wed a foreign
spouse :

Her sire and she to Rhodian Pasimond, 250
Though both repenting, were by promise
bound,

Nor could retract ; and thus, as Fate decreed,
Though better loved, he spoke too late to speed.

The doom was past, the ship already sent
Did all his tardy diligence prevent :

Sighed to herself the fair unhappy maid,
While stormy Cymon thus in secret said :

"The time is come for Iphigene to find
The miracle she wrought upon my mind :

Her charms have made me man, her ravished love

In rank shall place me with the blessed above,

For mine by love, by force she shall be mine,

Or death, if force should fail, shall finish my design."

Resolved he said ; and rigged with speedy care

A vessel strong, and well equipped for war.
The secret ship with chosen friends he stored ;

And bent to die, or conquer, went aboard.
Ambushed he lay behind the Cyprian shore,

Waiting the sail that all his wishes bore ;
Nor long expected, for the following tide

Sent out the hostile ship and beauteous bride.

To Rhodes the rival bark directly steered,
When Cymon sudden at her back appeared,

And stopped her flight : then standing on his prow,

In haughty terms he thus defied the foe :

"Or strike your sails at summons, or prepare

To prove the last extremities of war."

Thus warned, the Rhodians for the fight provide ;

Already were the vessels side by side,
These obstinate to save, and those to seize

the bride.

But Cymon soon his crooked grapples cast,
Which with tenacious hold his foes embraced,

And, armed with sword and shield, amid the press he passed.

Fierce was the fight, but hastening to his prey,

By force the furious lover freed his way ;
Himself alone dispersed the Rhodian crew,

The weak disdained, the valiant overthrew ;
Cheap conquest for his following friends

remained,
He reaped the field, and they but only

gleaned.
His victory confessed, the foes retreat,

And cast their weapons at the victor's feet.
Whom thus he cheered : "O Rhodiann

youth, I fought
For love alone, nor other booty sought :

Your lives are safe ; your vessel I resign,
Yours be your own, restoring what is mine :

In Iphigene I claim my rightful due,
Robbed by my rival, and detained by you :

Your Pasimond a lawless bargain drove ;
The parent could not sell the daughter's

love ;

Or if he could, my love disdains the laws,
And like a king by conquest gains his cause :

Where arms take place, all other pleas are vain ;
Love taught me force, and force shall love

maintain.
You, what by strength you could not keep,

release,
And at an easy ransom buy your peace."

Fear on the conquered side soon signed the accord,

And Iphigene to Cymon was restored ;
While to his arms the blushing bride he

took,
To seeming sadness she composed her look ;

As if by force subjected to his will,

Though pleased, dissembling, and a woman still :

And, for she wept, he wiped her falling tears,
And prayed her to dismiss her empty fears ;

"For yours I am," he said, "and have deserved

Your love much better, whom so long I served,

Than he to whom your formal father tied
Your vows, and sold a slave, not sent a

bride."

Thus while he spoke, he seized the willing
prey,

As Paris bore the Spartan spouse away.

Faintly she screamed, and even her eyes
confessed 820

She rather would be thought, than was dis-
tressed.

Who now exults but Cymon in his mind ?
Vain hopes and empty joys of human
kind,

Proud of the present, to the future blind !

Secure of fate, while Cymon ploughs the
sea,

And steers to Candy with his conquered
prey,

Scarce the third glass of measured hours
was run,

When like a fiery meteor sunk the sun ;

The promise of a storm ; the shifting gales
Forsake, by fits, and fill, the flagging
sails ; 830

Hoarse murmurs of the main from far were
heard,

And night came on, not by degrees pre-
pared,

But all at once ; at once the winds arise,
The thunders roll, the forked lightning flies.

In vain the master issues out commands,
In vain the trembling sailors ply their
hands ;

The tempest unforeseen prevents their care,
And from the first they labour in despair.

The giddy ship betwixt the winds and
tides,

Forced back and forwards, in a circle
rides, 840

Stunned with the different blows ; then
shoots amain,

Till counterbuffed, she stops, and sleeps
again.

Not more aghast the proud archangel fell,
Plunged from the height of heaven to
deepest hell,

Than stood the lover of his love possessed,
Now cursed the more, the more he had
been blessed ;

More anxious for her danger, than his own,
Death he defies ; but would be lost alone.

Sad Iphigene to womanish complaints
Adds pious prayers, and wearies all the
saints ; 850

Even if she could, her love she would re-
pent,

But since she cannot, dreads the punish-
ment :

Her forfeit faith, and Pasimond betrayed,
Are ever present, and her crime upbraided.
She blames herself, nor blames her lover
less,

Augments her anger, as her fears increase :
From her own back the burden would re-
move,

And lays the load on his ungoverned love,
Which interposing durst, in Heaven's de-
spite,

Invade and violate another's right : 860

The Powers incensed a while deferred his
pain,

And made him master of his vows in vain ;
but soon they punished his presumptuous
pride ;

That for his daring enterprise she died ;
Who rather not resisted than complied.

Then, impotent of mind, with altered
sense,

She hugged the offender, and forgave the
offence,

Sex to the last. Meantime with sails de-
clined

The wandering vessel drove before the
wind ;

Tossed and retossed, aloft, and then
alow, 870

Nor port they seek, nor certain course they
know,

But every moment wait the coming blow.
Thus blindly driven, by breaking day they
viewed

The land before them, and their fears re-
newed ;

The land was welcome, but the tempest
bore

The threatened ship against a rocky shore.
A winding bay was near ; to this they
bent,

And just escaped ; their force already spent.

Secure from storms, and panting from the
sea, 380

The land unknown at leisure they survey :
And saw (but soon their sickly sight with-
drew)

The rising towers of Rhodes at distant
view ;

And cursed the hostile shore of Pasimond,
Saved from the seas, and shipwrecked on
the ground.

The frightened sailors tried their strength
in vain

To turn the stern, and tempt the stormy
main ;

But the stiff wind withstood the labouring
oar,

And forced them forward on the fatal shore !
The crooked keel now bites the Rhodian
strand,

And the ship moored constrains the crew to
land : 390

Yet still they might be safe, because un-
known ;

But as ill fortune seldom comes alone,
The vessel they dismissed was driven before,
Already sheltered on their native shore ;

Known each, they know ; but each with
change of cheer ;

The vanquished side exults : the victors fear ;
Not them but theirs, made prisoners ere
they fight,

Despairing conquest, and deprived of flight.

The country rings around with loud
alarms,

And raw in fields the rude militia swarms ; 400
Mouths without hands ; maintained at vast
expense,

In peace a charge, in war a weak defence :
Stout once a month they march, a blustering
band,

And ever, but in times of need, at hand ;
This was the morn, when, issuing on the
guard,

Drawn up in rank and file they stood pre-
pared

Of seeming arms to make a short essay,
Then hasten to be drunk, the business of
the day.

The cowards would have fled, but that
they knew 410

Themselves so many, and their foes so few ;
But crowding on, the last the first impel ;
Till overborne with weight the Cyprians fell.
Cymon enslaved, who first the war begun,
And Iphigene once more is lost and won.

Deep in a dungeon was the captive cast,
Deprived of day, and held in fetters fast :
His life was only spared at their request,
Whom taken he so nobly had released :
But Iphigenia was the ladies' care,
Each in their turn addressed to treat the
fair ; 420

While Pasimond and his the nuptial feast
prepare.

Her secret soul to Cymon was inclined,
But she must suffer what her fates assigned :
So passive is the church of womankind.

What worse to Cymon could his fortune
deal,

Rolled to the lowest spoke of all her wheel ?
It rested to dismiss the downward weight,
Or raise him upward to his former height ;
The latter pleased ; and love (concerned the
most)

Prepared the amends, for what by love he
lost. 430

The sire of Pasimond had left a son,
Though younger, yet for courage early
known,

Ormisda called, to whom, by promise tied,
A Rhodian beauty was the destined bride ;
Cassandra was her name, above the rest
Renowned for birth, with fortune amply
blessed.

Lysimachus, who ruled the Rhodian state,
Was then by choice their annual magis-
trate :

He loved Cassandra too with equal fire,
But Fortune had not favoured his desire ; 440
Crossed by her friends, by her not disap-
proved,

Nor yet preferred, or like Ormisda loved ;
So stood the affair : some little hope re-
mained,

That should his rival chance to lose, he
gained,

Meantime young Pasimond his marriage
pressed,

Orained the nuptial day, prepared the
feast ;

And frugally resolved (the charge to shun,
Which would be double should he wed
alone)

To join his brother's bridal with his own.

Lysimachus, oppressed with mortal
grief,

Received the news, and studied quick
relief :

The fatal day approached ; if force were
used,

The magistrate his public trust abused ;

To justice liable, as law required ;

For when his office ceased, his power ex-
pired :

While power remained, the means were in
his hand

By force to seize and then forsake the land :

Betwixt extremes he knew not how to move,

A slave to fame, but more a slave to love :

Restraining others, yet himself not free,

Made impotent by power, debased by
dignity,

Both sides he weighed ; but after much de-
bate,

The man prevailed above the magistrate.

Love never fails to master what he finds,

But works a different way in different minds,

The fool enlightens, and the wise he blinds.

This youth proposing to possess and 'scape,

Began in murder, to conclude in rape :

Unpraised by me, though Heaven some-
times may bless

An impious act with undeserved success :

The great, it seems, are privileged alone

To punish all injustice but their own.

But here I stop, not daring to proceed,

Yet blush to flatter an unrighteous deed :

For crimes are but permitted, not decreed.

Resolved on force, his wit the prætor bent

To find the means that might secure the
event ;

Nor long he laboured, for his lucky thought

In captive Cymon found the friend he
sought.

The example pleased : the cause and crime
the same ;

An injured lover and a ravished dame.

How much he durst he knew by what he
dared,

The less he had to lose, the less he cared

To manage loathsome life when love was
the reward.

This pondered well, and fixed on his
intent,

In depth of night he for the prisoner sent ;

In secret sent the public view to shun,

Then with a sober smile he thus begun :

" The Powers above, who bounteously be-
stow

Their gifts and graces on mankind below,

Yet prove our merit first, nor blindly give

To such as are not worthy to receive :

For valour and for virtue they provide

Their due reward, but first they must be
tried :

These fruitful seeds within your mind they
sowed ;

'Twas yours to improve the talent they be-
stowed ;

They gave you to be born of noble kind,

They gave you love to lighten up your mind,

And purge the grosser parts ; they gave you
care

To please, and courage to deserve the
fair.

" Thus far they tried you, and by proof
they found

The grain entrusted in a grateful ground :

But still the great experiment remained,

They suffered you to lose the prize you
gained ;

That you might learn the gift was theirs
alone :

And when restored, to them the blessing
own.

Restored it soon will be ; the means pre-
pared,

The difficulty smoothed, the danger shared :

Be but yourself, the care to me resign,

Then Iphigene is yours, Cassandra mine.

Your rival Pasimond pursues your life,

Impatient to revenge his ravished wife,

But yet not his ; to-morrow is behind,
And love our fortunes in one band has
joined :

Two brothers are our foes ; Ormisda mine,
As much declared as Pasimond is thine :
To-morrow must their common vows be
tied :

With Love to friend, and Fortune for our
guide,
Let both resolve to die, or each redeem a
bride.

" Right I have none, nor hast thou much
to plead ; 530

'Tis force, when done, must justify the
deed :

Our task performed, we next prepare for
flight ;

And let the losers talk in vain of right :
We with the fair will sail before the wind ;
If they are grieved, I leave the laws behind,
Speak thy resolves : if now thy courage
droop,

Despair in prison, and abandon hope ;
But if thou dar'st in arms thy love regain,
(For liberty without thy love were vain ;)
Then second my design to seize the
prey, 530

Or lead to second rape, for well thou
know'st the way."

Said Cyron, overjoyed : " Do thou pro-
pose

The means to fight, and only show the
foes :

For from the first, when love had fired my
mind,

Resolved I left the care of life behind."

To this the bold Lysimachus replied,
" Let Heaven be neuter, and the sword
decide ;

The spouses are prepared, already play
The minstrels, and provoke the tardy day ;
By this the brides are waked, their grooms
are dressed ; 540

All Rhodes is summoned to the nuptial
feast,

All but myself, the sole unbidden guest.
Unbidden though I am, I will be there,
And, joined by thee, intend to joy the fair.

" Now hear the rest ; when day resigns the
light,

And cheerful torches gild the jolly night,
Be ready at my call ; my chosen few
With arms administered shall aid thy crew.
Then entering unexpected will we seize
Our destined prey, from men dissolved in
ease ; 550

By wine disabled, unprepared for fight :
And hastening to the seas, suborn our flight :
The seas are ours, for I command the fort,
A ship well manned expects us in the port :
If they, or if their friends, the prize contest,
Death shall attend the man who dares
resist."

It pleased : the prisoner to his hold retired,
His troop with equal emulation fired,
All fixed to fight, and all their wonted
work required.

The sun arose : the streets were thronged
around, 560

The palace opened, and the posts were
crowned.

The double bridegroom at the door attends
The expected spouse, and entertains the
friends ;

They meet, they lead to church, the priests
invoke

The Powers, and feed the flames with
fragrant smoke.

This done, they feast, and at the close of
night

By kindled torches vary their delight.
These lead the lively dance, and those the
brimming bowls invite.

Now, at the appointed place and hour
assigned,

With souls resolved the ravishers were
joined : 570

Three bands are formed ; the first is sent
before

To favour the retreat, and guard the shore ;
The second at the palace-gate is placed,
And up the lofty stairs ascend the last :

A peaceful troop they seem with shining
vests,

But coats of mail beneath secure their
breasts.

Dauntless they enter, Cymon at their head,
And find the feast renewed, the table
spread :

Sweet voices, mixed with instrumental
sounds,
Ascend the vaulted roof, the vaulted roof
rebounds. 580

When, like the harpies, rushing through
the hall

The sudden troop appears ; the tables fall,
Their smoking load is on the pavement
thrown ;

Each ravisher prepares to seize his own :
The brides, invaded with a rude embrace,
Shriek out for aid, confusion fills the place.
Quick to redeem the prey their plighted lords
Advance, the palace gleams with shining
swords.

But late is all defence, and succour vain ;
The rape is made, the ravishers remain : 590
Two sturdy slaves were only sent before
To bear the purchased prize in safety to
the shore.

The troop retires, the lovers close the rear,
With forward faces not confessing fear :
Backward they move, but scorn their pace
to mend ;
Then seek the stairs, and with slow haste
descend.

Fierce Pasimond, their passage to prevent,
Thrust full on Cymon's back in his descent,
The blade returned unbathed, and to the
handle bent.

Stout Cymon soon remounts, and cleft in
two 600

His rival's head with one descending blow :
And as the next in rank Ormisda stood,
He turned the point ; the sword, inured to
blood,

Bored his unguarded breast, which poured
a purple flood.

With vowed revenge the gathering crowd
pursues,

The ravishers turn head, the fight renews ;
The hall is heaped with corpse ; the
sprinkled gore

Besmeas the walls, and floats the marble
floor.

Dispersed at length, the drunken squadron
flies,

The victors to their vessel bear the prize ; 610
And hear behind loud groans, and lament-
able cries.

The crew with merry shouts their anchors
weigh,

Then ply their oars, and brush the buxom
sea,

While troops of gathered Rhodians crowd
the quay.

What should the people do when left alone ?
The governor and government are gone ;
The public wealth to foreign parts con-
veyed ;

Some troops disbanded, and the rest un-
paid.

Rhodes is the sovereign of the sea no more,
Their ships unrigged, and spent their naval
store ; 620

They neither could defend, nor can pursue ;
But grind their teeth, and cast a helpless
view :

In vain with darts a distant war they try ;
Short, and more short, the missive weapons
fly.

Meanwhile the ravishers their crimes enjoy,
And flying sails and sweeping oars employ :
The cliffs of Rhodes in little space are lost,
Jove's isle they seek, nor Jove denies his
coast.

In safety landed on the Candian shore,
With generous wines their spirits they
restore : 630

There Cymon with his Rhodian friend re-
sides ;

Both court, and wed at once the willing
brides.

A war ensues, the Cretans own their cause,
Stiff to defend their hospitable laws :

Both parties lose by turns ; and neither
wins,

Till peace, propounded by a truce, begins.

The kindred of the slain forgive the deed,
But a short exile must for show precede :

The term expired, from Candia they remove,
And happy each, at home, enjoys his
love. 640

PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES.

NOTE.

In this edition, the Prologues and Epilogues written by Dryden for his own plays, and contained in Scott's edition of the poet's works, are placed first. They are followed by incidental Prologues and Epilogues, to be spoken before the King and Queen, or before the University of Oxford, and by Prologues and Epilogues written by Dryden for the plays of his contemporary dramatists. For these he was paid at first, some writers say, two guineas, and others five; and that when Southern requested him to write one for him, he demanded three or ten guineas. "Not," said he, "young man, out of disrespect to you; but the players have had my goods too cheap."

Dryden, always a poor man, was glad of these small earnings. The stage was not then what it is now, and his plays are said to have not brought him more than a hundred pounds each, including the gain of the third night, the dedication, and the sale of the play. The last things he ever wrote, within twenty days of his death, were the Prologue and Epilogue to "The Pilgrim."

The Prologues and Epilogues here given, have been corrected from Scott's edition of Dryden's plays in his collection of all the poet's works.

PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO "THE WILD GALLANT." *

1662—SECOND REPRESENTATION, 1669.

PROLOGUE.

Is it not strange to hear a poet say,
He comes to ask you how you like the
play?

You have not seen it yet; alas! 'tis true;
But now your love and hatred judge, not
you.

And cruel factions (bribed by interest)
come,

Not to weigh merit, but to give their doom.
Our poet, therefore, jealous of th' event,
And (though much boldness takes) not confident,

Has sent me whither you, fair ladies, too
Sometimes upon as small occasions go, 10
And from this scheme, drawn from the
hour and day,
Bid me inquire the fortune of his play.

[*The curtain drawn discovers two
Astrologers;† the Prologue is
presented to them.*]

1 *Astrol.* reads. A figure of the heavenly
bodies in their several apartments, Feb.
5, half an hour after three afternoon, from

* Dryden's first play; see note to his letter
to Lady Castlemain, p. 204. He afterwards
altered it, and it was more successful, but gave
no promise of his future excellence as a dramatist.

† Dryden believed in astrology, and practised
the art himself. The play, in the time of Charles
II., commenced at half past three in the after-
noon.

whence you are to judge the success of a
new play, called "The Wild Gallant."

2 *Astrol.* Who must judge of it, we or
these gentlemen? We'll not meddle with
it; so tell your poet. Here are, in this
house, the ablest mathematicians in Europe
for his purpose.

They will resolve the question, ere they part.

1 *Ast.* Yet let us judge it by the rules of
art:

First Jupiter, the ascendant's lord disgraced,
In the twelfth house and near grim Saturn
placed,

Denote short life unto the play.

2 *Ast.* Jove yet,
In his apartment Sagittary, set
Under his own roof, cannot take much
wrong.

1 *Ast.* Why then the life's not very short,
nor long; 20

2 *Ast.* The luck not very good, nor very
ill;

Prolo. That is to say, 'tis as 'tis taken
still.

1 *Ast.* But, brother, Ptolemy the learned
says,

'Tis the fifth house from whence we judge
of plays.

Venus, the lady of that house, I find
Is Peregrine; your play is ill designed;
It should have been but one continued song
Or, at the least, a dance of three hours
long,

a *Act*. But yet the greatest mischief does remain,
 The twelfth apartment bears the lords of Spain;
 Whence I conclude, it is your author's lot,
 To be endangered by a Spanish plot.

Prolo. Our poet yet protection hopes from you;
 But bribes you not with anything that's new.
 Nature is old, which poets imitate;
 And for wit, those that boast their own estate
 Forget Fletcher and Ben before them went,
 Their elder brothers, and that vastly spent;
 So much, 'twill hardly be repaired again,
 Not though supplied with all the wealth of Spain.
 This play is English, and the growth your own;
 As such it yields to English plays alone.
 He could have wished it better for your sakes,
 But that in plays he finds you love mistakes:
 Besides, he thought it was in vain to mend
 What you are bound in honour to defend;
 That English wit, howe'er despised by some,
 Like English valour, still may overcome.

EPILOGUE.

The Wild Gallant has quite played out his game;
 He's married now, and that will make him tame:
 Or if you think marriage will not reclaim him,
 The critics swear they'll damn him, but they'll tame him.
 Yet, though our poet's threatened most by these,
 They are the only people he can please:
 For he, to humour them, has shown to-day
 That which they only like, a wretched play.
 But though his play be ill, here have been shown
 The greatest wits and beauties of the town;

And his occasion having brought you here,
 You are too grateful to become severe.
 There is not any person here so mean,
 But he may freely judge each act and scene.
 But if you bid him choose his judges, then
 He boldly names true English gentlemen;
 For he ne'er thought a handsome garb or dress
 So great a crime, to make their judgment less;
 And with these gallants he these ladies joins,
 To judge that language their converse refines.
 But if their censures should condemn his play,
 Far from disputing, he does only pray
 He may Leander's destiny obtain:
 Now spare him; drown him when he comes again.

PROLOGUE TO
 "THE RIVAL LADIES."

1663—PUBLISHED 1664.

'Tis much desired, you judges of the town
 Would pass a vote to put all prologues down;
 For who can show me, since they first were writ,
 They e'er converted one hard-hearted wit?
 Yet the world's mended well; in former days
 Good prologues were as scarce as now good plays,
 For the reforming poets of our age,
 In this first charge, spend their poetic rage:
 Expect no more when once the prologue's done;
 The wit is ended ere the play's begun.
 You now have habits, dances, scenes, and rhymes;
 High language often; ay, and sense, sometimes.

As for a clear contrivance, doubt it not ;
They blow out candles to give light to
th' plot.

And for surprise, two bloody-minded men
Fight till they die, then rise and dance
again.

Such deep intrigues you're welcome to
this day :

But blame yourselves, not him who writ
the play ;

Though his plot's dull, as can be well
desired,

Wit stiff as any you have e'er admired : 20
He's bound to please, not to write well ;
and knows,

There is a mode in plays as well as
clothes ;

Therefore, kind judges——

A SECOND PROLOGUE ENTERS.

2. Hold ; would you admit

For judges all you see within the pit ?

1. Whom would he then except, or on
what score ?

2. All who (like him) have writ ill plays
before ;

For they, like thieves condemned, are
hangmen made,

To execute the members of their trade.

All that are writing now he would dis-
own,

But then he must except—even all the
town ; 30

All choleric, losing gamesters, who, in
spite,

Will damn to-day, because they lost last
night ;

All servants, whom their mistress' scorn
upbraids ;

All maudlin lovers, and all slighted maids ;

All, who are out of humour, or severe ;

All, that want wit, or hope to find it here.

PROLOGUE TO

"THE INDIAN QUEEN." *

As the music plays a soft air, the curtain rises
slowly, and discovers an Indian boy and girl
sleeping under two plantain-trees ; and, when
the curtain is almost up, the music turns into
a tune expressing an alarm, at which the
boy awakes, and speaks :

BOY.

WAKE, wake, Quevira ! our soft rest must
cease,

And fly together with our country's peace !
No more must we sleep under plantain
shade,

Which neither heat could pierce, nor
cold invade ;

Where bounteous nature never feels decay,
And opening buds drive falling fruits away.

QUEVIRA.

Why should men quarrel here, where all
possess

As much as they can hope for by suc-
cess ?—

None can have most, where nature is so
kind,

As to exceed man's use, though not his
mind. 10

BOY.

By ancient prophecies we have been told,
Our world shall be subdued by one more
old ;—

And, see, that world already's hither
come.

QUEVIRA.

If these be they, we welcome then our
doom !

Their looks are such, that mercy flows
from thence,

More gentle than our native innocence.

* "The Indian Queen" was the joint produc-
tion of Dryden and his brother-in-law, Sir Robert
Howard.

BOY.

Why should we then fear these, our
enemies,
That rather seem to us like deities?

QUEVIRA.

By their protection, let us beg to live ;
They came not here to conquer, but
forgive.— 20
If so, your goodness may your power
express,
And we shall judge both best by our
success.

EPILOGUE TO

"THE INDIAN QUEEN."

Spoken by MONTEZUSA.

You see what shifts we are enforced to try,
To help out wit with some variety ;
Shows may be found that never yet were
seen ;
'Tis hard to find such wit as ne'er has
been :
You have seen all that this old world
can do,
We, therefore, try the fortune of the new,
And hope it is below your aim to hit
At untaught nature with your practised
wit :
Our naked Indians, then, when wits
appear,
Would as soon choose to have the
Spaniards here. 10
'Tis true, you have marks enough,—the
plot, the show,
The poet's scenes, nay, more, the painter's
too ;
If all this fail, considering the cost,
Tis a true voyage to the Indies lost :
But if you smile on all, then these designs,
Like the imperfect treasure of our minds,
Will pass for current wheresoe'er they go,
When to your bounteous hands their
stamps they owe.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"THE INDIAN EMPEROR,"

THE SEQUEL TO "THE INDIAN
QUEEN."

1665—PUBLISHED 1667.

PROLOGUE.

ALMIGHTY critics ! whom our Indians here
Worship, just as they do the devil—for
fear ;
In reverence to your power, I come this
day,
To give you timely warning of our play.
The scenes are old, the habits are the
same
We wore last year, before the Spaniards
came.*
Now, if you stay, the blood that shall be
shed
From this poor play be all upon your head.
We neither promise you one dance or show ;
Then plot and language, they are wanting
too. 10
But you, kind wits, will those light faults
excuse,
Those are the common frailties of the
Muse ;
Which who observes, he buys his place
too dear,
For 'tis your business to be cozened here.
These wretched spies of wit must then
confess,
They take more pains to please themselves
the less.
Grant us such judges, Phœbus, we request,
As still mistake themselves into a jest ;
Such easy judges that our poet may
Himself admire the fortune of his play ; 20
And arrogantly, as his fellows do,
Think he writes well, because he pleases
you.

* Alluding to "The Indian Queen," in which
the scene is laid before the arrival of the Spaniards
in America. It was acted in 1664, and this
in 1665.—SCOTT.

This he conceives not hard to bring about,
If all of you would join to help him out :
Would each man take but what he under-
stands,
And leave the rest upon the poet's hands.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by a MERCURY.

To all and singular in this full meeting,
Ladies and gallants, Phœbus sends ye
greeting.

To all his sons, by whate'er title known,
Whether of court, of coffee-house, or town ;
From his most mighty sons, whose confi-
dence

Is placed in lofty sound and humble sense,
Even to his little infants of the time,
Who write new songs and trust in tune and
rhyme.

Be't known that Phœbus (being daily
grieved

To see good plays condemned and bad
received),¹⁰

Ordains, your judgment upon every cause,
Henceforth be limited by wholesome laws.
He first thinks fit no sonneteer advance
His censure, farther than the song or dance.

Your wit burlesque may one step higher
climb,

And in his sphere may judge all dogrel
rhyme :

All proves, all moves, and loves, and
honours too ;

All that appears high sense, and scarce is
low.

As for the coffee-wits, he says not much ;
Their proper business is to damn the
Dutch.²⁰

For the great Dons of wit—

Phœbus gives them full privilege alone
To damn all others, and cry up their own.
Last, for the ladies, 'tis Apollo's will,
They should have power to save, but not to
kill :

For Love and he long since have thought
it fit,

Wit live by Beauty, Beauty reign by wit.

PROLOGUE TO

"SECRET LOVE,
OR THE MAIDEN QUEEN."

1667-1668.

I.

HE who writ this, not without pains and
thought,
From French and English theatres has
brought
The exactest rules by which a play is
wrought.

The unities of action, place and time ;
The scenes unbroken ; and a mingled
chime
Of Jonson's humours with Corneille's
rhyme.

But while dead colours he with care did
lay,
He fears his wit, or plot he did not weigh,
Which are the living beauties of a play.

Plays are like towns, which, howe'er for-
tified¹⁰
By engineers, have still some weaker side,
By the o'er sure defendant unespied.

And with that art you make approaches
now ;
Such skilful fury in assaults you show,
That every poet without shame may bow.

Ours, therefore, humbly would attend your
doom
If, soldier-like, he may have terms to
come
With flying colours, and with beat of drum.

[*The PROLOGUE goes out, and stays
while a tune is played, after which
he returns again and speaks.*]

THE SECOND PROLOGUE TO
"SECRET LOVE."

I HAD forgot one half, I do protest,
And now am sent again to speak the rest.
He bows to every great and noble wit ;
But to the little Hectors of the pit
Our poet's sturdy, and will not submit.
He'll be beforehand with them and not stay
To see each peevish critic stab his play ;
Each puny censor, who, his skill to boast,
Is cheaply witty at the poet's cost.
No critic's verdict should, of right, stand
good, 10

They are excepted all, as men of blood ;
And the same law should shield him from
their fury,
Which has excluded butchers from a jury.
You'd all be wits——
But writing's tedious, and that way may
fail ;
The most compendious method is to rail ;
Which you so like, you think yourselves ill-
used
When in smart prologues you are not
abused.

A civil prologue is approved by no man ;
You hate it as you do a civil woman : 20
Your fancy's palled, and liberally you pay
To have it quickened ere you see a play ;
Just as old sinners, worn from their delight,
Give money to be whipped to appetite.
But what a pox keep I so much ado
To save our poet? He is one of you ;
A brother judgment, and as I hear say,
A cursed critic as e'er damned a play.
Good, savage gentlemen, your own kind
spare ;

He is, like you, a very wolf or bear ; 30
Yet think not he'll your ancient rights
invade,

Or stop the course of your free-damning
trade ;

For he, (he vows,) at no friend's play can sit
But he must needs find fault, to show his
wit,

Then, for his sake, ne'er stint your own
delight ;
Throw boldly, for he sits to all that write ;
With such he ventures on an even lay,
For they bring ready money into play.
Those who write not and yet all writers nick
Are bankrupt gamesters, for they damn on
tick. 40

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
"THE WILD GALLANT."

WHEN REVIVED IN 1667.

PROLOGUE.

As some raw squire, by tender mother bred,
Till one-and-twenty keeps his maiden-
head ;
(Pleased with some sport, which he alone
does find,
And thinks a secret to all human kind,)
Till mightily in love, yet half afraid,
He first attempts the gentle dairy-maid :
Succeeding there, and, led by the renown
Of Whetstone's park, he comes at length
to town ;
Where entered by some schoolfellow or
friend,
He grows to break glass-windows in the
end : 10
His valour too, which with the watch
began,
Proceeds to duel, and he kills his man.
By such degrees, while knowledge he did
want,
Our unfledged author writ a Wild Gallant.
He thought him monstrous lewd, I'll lay
my life,
Because suspected with his landlord's wife ;
But, since his knowledge of the town
began,
He thinks him now a very civil man ;
And, much ashamed of what he was
before,
Has fairly played him at three wench's
more. 30

'Tis some amends his frailties to confess ;
 Pray pardon him his want of wickedness.
 He's towardsly, and will come on apace ;
 His frank confession shows he has some
 grace.
 You baulked him when he was a young
 beginner,
 And almost spoiled a very hopeful sinner ;
 But if once more you slight his weak en-
 deavour,
 For aught I know, he may turn tail for
 ever.

EPILOGUE.

Of all dramatic writing, comic wit,
 As 'tis the best, so 'tis most hard to hit.
 For it lies all in level to the eye,
 Where all may judge, and each defect may
 spy.
 Humour is that which every day we meet,
 And therefore known as every public
 street ;
 In which, if e'er the poet go astray,
 You all can point, 'twas there he lost his
 way.
 But, what's so common to make pleasant
 too,
 Is more than any wit can always do. 10
 For 'tis, like Turks, with hen and rice to
 treat ;
 To make regalios out of common meat.
 But, in your diet, you grow savages :
 Nothing but human flesh your taste can
 please ;
 And, as their feasts with slaughtered slaves
 began,
 So you, at each new play, must have a
 man.
 Hither you come, as to see prizes fought ;
 If no blood's drawn, you cry, the prize is
 nought.
 But fools grow wary now ; and, when they
 see
 A poet eyeing round the company, 20
 Straight each man for himself begins to
 doubt ;
 They shrink like seamen when a press
 comes out.

Few of them will be found for public
 use,
 Except you charge an oaf upon each
 house,
 Like the train bands, and every man
 engage
 For a sufficient fool to serve the stage.
 And when with much ado you get him
 there,
 Where he in all his glory should appear,
 Your poets make him such rare things to
 say,
 That he's more wit than any in the
 play : 30
 But of so ill a mingle with the rest,
 As when a parrot's taught to break a
 jest.
 Thus, aiming to be fine, they make a
 show,
 As tawdry squires in country churches do,
 Things well considered, 'tis so hard to
 make
 A comedy, which should the knowing
 take,
 That our dull poet, in despair to please,
 Does humbly beg by me his writ of ease.
 'Tis a land-tax, which he's too poor to
 pay ;
 You therefore must some other impost
 lay. 40
 Would you but change, for serious plot
 and verse,
 This motley garniture of fool and farce,
 Nor scorn a mode, because 'tis taught at
 home,
 Which does, like vests, our gravity become,
 Our poet yields you should this play
 refuse :
 As tradesmen, by the change of fashions,
 lose
 With some content their fripperies of
 France,
 In hope it may their staple trade advance.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
 "SIR MARTIN MAR-ALL,
 OR THE FEIGNED INNOCENCE."

1667—PUBLISHED 1668.

PROLOGUE.

FOOLS, which each man meets in his dish
 each day,
 Are yet the great regalias of a play ;
 In which to poets you but just appear,
 To prize that highest, which cost them so
 dear :

Fops in the town more easily will pass ;
 One story makes a statutable ass ;
 But such in plays must be much thicker
 sown,

Like yolks of eggs, a dozen beat to one.
 Observing poets all their walks invade,
 As men watch woodcocks gliding through
 a glade : ¹⁰

And when they have enough for comedy,
 They stow their several bodies in a pie :
 The poet's but the cook to fashion it ;
 For, gallants, you yourselves have found
 the wit.

To bid you welcome would your bounty
 wrong ;
 None welcome those who bring their cheer
 along.

EPILOGUE.

As country vicars, when the sermon's
 done,
 Run headlong to the benediction ;
 Well knowing, though the better sort may
 stay,

The vulgar rout will run unblest away :
 So we, when once our play is done, make
 haste

With a short epilogue to close your taste.
 In thus withdrawing, we seem mannerly ;
 But, when the curtain's down, we peep,
 and see

A jury of the wits, who still stay late,
 And in their club decree the poor play's
 fate ; ¹⁰

Their verdict back is to the boxes brought,
 Thence all the town pronounces it their
 thought.

Thus, gallants, we, like Lilly,* can foresee ;
 But if you ask us what our doom will be,
 We by to-morrow will our fortune cast,
 As he tells all things when the year is past.

PROLOGUE TO

"THE TEMPEST."

1667—PUBLISHED 1668.

As when a tree's cut down the secret root
 Lives underground, and thence new
 branches shoot,
 So from old Shakespeare's honoured dust
 this day

Springs up and buds a new reviving play :
 Shakespeare, who (taught by none) did
 first impart

To Fletcher wit, to labouring Jonson art ;
 He, monarch-like, gave those his subjects
 law,

And is that Nature which they paint and
 draw.

Fletcher reached that which on his heights
 did grow,

Whilst Jonson crept, and gathered all
 below. ¹⁰

This did his love, and this his mirth
 digest :

One imitates him most, the other best.
 If they have since outwrit all other men,
 'Tis with the drops which fell from Shake-
 speare's pen.

The storm which vanished on the neigh-
 bouring shore

Was taught by Shakespeare's Tempest first
 to roar.

That innocence and beauty, which did
 smile

In Fletcher, grew on this enchanted isle.

* The famous astrologer.

But Shakespeare's magic could not copied
be;

Within that circle none durst walk but he, 20
I must confess 'twas bold, nor would you
now

That liberty to vulgar wits allow,
Which works by magic supernatural things;
But Shakespeare's power is sacred as a
king's.

Those legends from old priesthood were
received,

And then he writ, as people then believed.
But if for Shakespeare we your grace im-
plore,

We for our theatre shall want it more :
Who, by our dearth of youths, are forced to
employ

One of our women to present a boy ; 30
And that's a transformation, you will say,
Exceeding all the magic in the play.

Let none expect in the last act to find
Her sex transformed from man to woman-
kind.

Whate'er she was before the play began,
All you shall see of her is perfect man.
Or, if your fancy will be farther led
To find her woman—it must be abed.

EPILOGUE.

Gallants, by all good signs it does appear
That sixty-seven's a very damning year,
For knaves abroad, and for ill poets here.

Among the Muses there's a general rot ;
The rhyming Monsieur, and the Spanish
plot,
Defy or court, all's one, they go to pot.

The ghosts of poets walk within this place,
And haunt us actors wheresoe'er we pass,
Invisions bloodier than King Richard's was.

For this poor wretch, he has not much to
say, 10

But quietly brings in his part of the play,
And begs the favour to be damned to-day.

He sends me only like a sheriff's man
here

To let you know the malefactor's near,
And that he means to die *en cavalier*.

For, if you should be gracious to his pen,
The example will prove ill to other men,
And you'll be troubled with them all again.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"AN EVENING'S LOVE,

OR THE MOCK ASTROLOGER."

1668—PUBLISHED 1671.

PROLOGUE.

WHEN first our poet set himself to write,
Like a young bridegroom on his wedding-
night,

He laid about him, and did so bestir him,
His Muse could never lie in quiet for him :
But now his honey-moon is gone and past,
Yet the ungrateful drudgery must last,

And he is bound, as civil husbands do,
To strain himself, in complaisance to you :
To write in pain, and counterfeit a bliss,
Like the faint smacking of an after-kiss. 10
But you, like wives ill-pleased, supply his
want ;

Each writing Monsieur is a fresh gallant :
And though, perhaps, 'twas done as well
before,

Yet still there's something in a new amour.
Your several poets work with several tools,
One gets you wits, another gets you fools :
This pleases you with some by-stroke of
wit,

This finds some cranny that was never hit,
But should these jaunty lovers daily come
To do your work, like your good man at
home, 20

Their fine small-timbered wits would soon
decay ;

These are gallants but for a holiday.

Others you had who oftener have appeared,
Whom for mere impotence you have
cashiered :

Such as at first came on with pomp and
glory,

But, overstraining, soon fell flat before ye.
Their useless weight with patience long was
borne,

But at the last you threw them off with
scorn.

As for the poet of this present night,
Though now he claims in you an husband's
right,

He will not hinder you of fresh delight.

He, like a seaman, seldom will appear,
And means to trouble home but thrice a-
year ;

That only time from your gallants he'll
borrow :

Be kind to-day, and cuckold him to-morrow.

EPILOGUE.

My part being small, I have had time to-day
To mark your various censures of our play.
First, looking for a judgment or a wit,
Like Jews, I saw them scattered through
the pit ;

And where a lot of smilers lent an ear
To one that talked, I knew the foe was there.
The club of jests went round ; he, who had
none,

Borrowed the next, and told it for his
own.

Among the rest, they kept a fearful stir,
In whispering that he stole the Astrologer ;¹⁰
And said, betwixt a French and English
plot,

He eased his half-tired muse, on pace and
trot.

Up starts a Monsieur, new come o'er, and
warm

In the French stoop, and the pull-back of
the arm :

" *Morbleu,*" *dit-il*, and cocks, " I am a
rogue,

But he has quite spoiled the Feigned
Astrologue."

" Pox," says another, " here's so grent a stir
With a son of a whore farce that's regular,
A rule, where nothing must decorum shock !
Damme, 'tis dull as dining by the clock. ²⁰
An evening ! Why the devil should we be
vext,

Whether he gets the wench this night or
next ?"

When I heard this, I to the poet went,
Told him the house was full of discontent,
And asked him what excuse he could invent.
He neither swore nor stormed, as poets do,
But, most unlike an author, vowed 'twas
true ;

Yet said, he used the French like enemies,
And did not steal their plots, but made them
prize.

But should he all the pains and charges
count ³⁰

Of taking them, the bill so high would
mount,

That, like prize goods, which through the
office come,

He should have had them much more cheap
at home.

He still must write, and, banquier-like, each
day

Accept new bills, and he must break or pay.
When through his hands such sums must
yearly run,

You cannot think the stock is all his own,
His haste his other errors might excuse,
But there's no mercy for a guilty Muse ;
For, like a mistress, she must stand or
fall ⁴⁰

And please you to a height, or not at all. ¹

PROLOGUE TO

"TYRANNIC LOVE."

1669-1670.

SELF-LOVE, which, never rightly under-
stood,
Makes poets still conclude their plays are
good,

And malice, in all critics, reigns so high,
That for small errors, they whole plays de-
cry ;

So that to see this fondness, and that spite,
You'd think that none but madmen judge
or write.

Therefore our poet, as he thinks not fit
To impose upon you what he writes for
wit ;

So hopes, that, leaving you your censures
free,

You equal judges of the whole will be : 10
They judge but half, who only faults will
see.

Poets, like lovers, should be bold and
dare,

They spoil their business with an over-
care ;

And he, who servilely creeps after sense,
Is safe, but ne'er will reach an excellence.
Hence 'tis, our poet, in his conjuring,
Allowed his fancy the full scope and
swing.

But when a tyrant for his theme he had,
He loosed the reins, and bid his muse run
mad :

And though he stumbles in a full
career, 20

Yet rashness is a better fault than fear.

He saw his way ; but in so swift a pace,
To choose the ground might be to lose the
race.

They then, who of each trip the advantage
take,

Find but those faults, which they want wit
to make.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by MRS. ELLEN when she was to
be carried off dead by the Bearers.*

TO THE BEARER.

Hold ! are you mad ? you damned, con-
founded dog !

I am to rise, and speak the epilogue.

TO THE AUDIENCE.

I come, kind gentlemen, strange news to
tell ye ;

I am the ghost of poor departed Nelly.
Sweet ladies, be not frightened ; I'll be
civil ;

I'm what I was, a little harmless devil.
For, after death, we sprites have just such
natures

We had, for all the world, when human
creatures ;

And, therefore, I, that was an actress here,
Play all my tricks in hell, a goblin there. 10
Gallants, look to 't, you say there are no
sprites ;

But I'll come dance about your beds at
nights ;

And faith you'll be in a sweet kind of
taking,

When I surprise you between sleep and
waking.

To tell you true, I walk, because I die
Out of my calling, in a tragedy.

O poet, damned dull poet, who could prove
So senseless, to make Nelly die for love !

Nay, what's yet worse, to kill me in the
prime

Of Easter-term, in tart and cheese-cake
time ! 20

I'll fit the fop ; for I'll not one word say,
To excuse his godly, out-of-fashion play ;
A play, which, if you dare but twice sit
out,

You'll all be slandered, and be thought
devout.

But, farewell, gentlemen, make haste to
me,

I'm sure ere long to have your company.
As for my epitaph when I am gone,

I'll trust no poet, but will write my own :—
Here Nelly lies, who, though she lived a
slattern,

Yet died a princess, acting in St. Cath-
erine. 30

* Mrs. Ellen is Nell Gwyn.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
 "ALMANZOR AND ALMA-
 HIDE,

OR THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA."

1670-1671.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by MRS. ELLEN GWYN, in a broad-brimmed hat and waist-belt.

THIS jest was first of the other house's making,
 And, five times tried, has never failed of taking;
 For 'twere a shame a poet should be killed
 Under the shelter of so broad a shield.
 This is that hat, whose very sight did win ye
 To laugh and clap as though the devil were in ye.
 As then for Nokes,* so now I hope you'll be
 So dull, to laugh once more for love of me.
 "I'll write a play," says one, "for I have got
 A broad-brimmed hat and waist-belt towards a plot."¹⁰
 Says the other, "I have one more large than that."
 Thus they out-write each other—with a hat!
 The brims still grew with every play they writ;
 And grew so large, they covered all the wit.
 Hat was the play; 'twas language, wit, and tale:
 Like them that find meat, drink, and cloth in ale.
 What dulness do these mongrel wits confess,
 When all their hope is acting of a dress!

* Nokes was a popular comedian who acted at the Duke of York's Theatre, "the other house."

Thus, two the best comedians of the age
 Must be worn out with being blocks of the stage:²⁰
 Like a young girl, who better things has known,
 Beneath their poet's impotence they groan.
 See now what charity it was to save!
 They thought you liked what only you forgave;
 And brought you more dull sense, dull sense much worse
 Than brisk gay nonsense, and the heavier curse.
 They bring old iron, and glass upon the stage,
 To barter with the Indians of our age.
 Still they write on, and like great authors show;
 But 'tis as rollers in wet gardens grow³⁰
 Heavy with dirt, and gathering as they go.
 May none, who have so little understood,
 To like such trash, presume to praise what's good!
 And may those drudges of the stage, whose fate
 Is damned dull farce more dully to translate,
 Fall under that excise the state thinks fit
 To set on all French wares, whose worst is wit.
 French farce, worn out at home, is sent abroad;
 And, patched up here, is made our English mode.
 Henceforth, let poets, ere allowed to write,⁴⁰
 Be searched, like duellists before they fight,
 For wheel-broad hats, dull honour, all that chaff,
 Which makes you mourn, and makes the vulgar laugh:
 For these, in plays, are as unlawful arms
 As, in a combat, coats of mail and charms.

EPILOGUE.

Success, which can no more than beauty
last,
Makes our sad poet mourn your favours
past :
For, since without desert he got a name,
He fears to lose it now with greater shame.
Fame, like a little mistress of the town,
Is gained with ease, but then she's lost as
soon ;
For, as those tawdry misses, soon or late,
Jilt such as keep them at the highest rate,
And oft the lacquey, or the brawny clown,
Gets what is hid in the loose-bodied
gown ; 10
So, Fame is false to all that keep her long,
And turns up to the fop that's brisk and
young.
Some wiser poet now would leave fame
first ;
But elder wits are, like old lovers, cursed :
Who, when the vigour of their youth is
spent,
Still grow more fond as they grow impotent.
This, some years hence, our poet's case
may prove ;
But yet, he hopes, he's young enough to
love.
When forty comes, if e'er he live to see
That wretched, fumbling age of poetry, 20
'Twill be high time to bid his Muse
adieu :
Well he may please himself, but never you.
Till then, he'll do as well as he began,
And hopes you will not find him less a
man.
Think him not duller for this year's delay ;
He was prepared, the women were away ;
And men, without their parts, can hardly
play.
If they, through sickness, seldom did
appear,
Pity the virgins of each theatre :
For at both houses 'twas a sickly year ! 30
And pity us, your servants, to whose cost,
In one such sickness, nine whole months
are lost.

Their stay, he fears, has ruined what he
writ :
Long waiting both disables love and wit.
They thought they gave him leisure to do
well :
But, when they forced him to attend, he
fell !
Yet, though he much has failed, he begs to-
day
You will excuse his unperforming play :
Weakness sometimes great passion does
express ;
He had pleased better, had he loved you
less. 40

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
THE SECOND PART OF
"ALMANZOR AND ALMA-
HIDE,
OR THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA."

1670-1671.

PROLOGUE.

THEY who write ill, and they who ne'er
durst write,
'Turn critics out of mere revenge and
spite :
A playhouse gives them fame ; and up
there starts,
From a mean fifth-rate wit, a man of parts.
(So common faces on the stage appear ;
We take them in, and they turn beauties
here.)
Our author fears those critics as his fate ;
And those he fears, by consequence, must
hate,
For they the traffic of all wit invade,
As scriveners draw away the banker's
trade. 10
Howe'er, the poet's safe enough to-day ;
They cannot censure an unfinished play.
But, as when vizard-mask appears in pit,
Straight every man who thinks himself a
wit

Perks up, and, managing his comb with grace,
 With his white wig sets off his nut-brown face;
 That done, bears up to the prize, and views each limb,
 To know her by her rigging and her trim;
 Then, the whole noise of fops to wagers go,—
 "Fox on her, 't must be she;" and—
 "Damme, no!" —
 Just so, I prophesy, these wits to-day
 Will blindly guess at our imperfect play;
 With what new plots our Second Part is filled,
 Who must be kept alive, and who be killed.
 And as those vizard-masks maintain that fashion,
 To soothe and tickle sweet imagination;
 So our dull poet keeps you on with masking,
 To make you think there's something worth your asking.
 But, when 'tis shown, that which does now delight you
 Will prove a dowdy, with a face to fright you.

EPILOGUE.

They who have best succeeded on the stage
 Have still conformed their genius to their age.
 Thus Jonson did mechanic humour show
 When men were dull, and conversation low.
 Then comedy was faultless, but 'twas coarse:
 Cobb's tankard was a jest, and Otter's horse.
 And as their comedy, their love was mean,
 Except by chance in some one laboured scene,
 Which must atone for an ill-written play,
 They rose, but at their height could seldom stay.
 Fame then was cheap, and the first comer sped;
 And they have kept it since, by being dead.

But, were they now to write, when critics weigh
 Each line, and every word, throughout a play,
 None of them, no, not Jonson in his height,
 Could pass, without allowing grains for weight.
 Think it not envy, that these truths are told;
 Our poet's not malicious, though he's bold.
 'Tis not to brand them that their faults are shown,
 But by their errors to excuse his own.
 If love and honour now are higher raised,
 'Tis not the poet but the age is praised.
 Wit's now arrived to a more high degree;
 Our native language more refined and free;
 Our ladies and our men now speak more wit
 In conversation, than those poets writ.
 Then, one of these is, consequently, true;
 That what this poet writes comes short of you
 And imitates you ill (which most he fears),
 Or else his writing is not worse than theirs.
 Yet, though you judge (as sure the critics will)
 That some before him writ with greater skill,
 In this one praise he has their fame surpast,
 To please an age more gallant than the last.

PROLOGUE

FOR THE WOMEN,

*When they acted at the Old Theatre in
 Lincoln's Inn Fields.*

1672.

WERE none of you, gallants, e'er driven so hard,
 As when the poor kind soul was under guard,
 And could not do't at home, in some by-street
 To take a lodging, and in private meet?

Such is our case; we can't appoint our house,
The lovers' old and wonted rendezvous,
But hither to this trusty nook remove;
The worse the lodging is, the more the love.
For much good pastime, many a dear sweet hug
Is stolen in garrets, on the humble rug. 10
Here's good accommodation in the pit;
The grave demurely in the midst may sit,
And so the hot Burgundian * on the side
Ply vizard-mask, and o'er the benches stride:
Here are convenient upper boxes too,
For these that make the most triumphant show;
All that keep coaches must not sit below.
There, gallants, you betwixt the acts retire,
And at dull plays have something to admire:
We, who look up, can your addresses mark, 20
And see the creatures coupled in the ark:
So we expect the lovers, braves, and wits;
The gaudy house† with scenes will serve for cits.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
"THE MAIDEN QUEEN,
OR SECRET LOVE."

When acted by the Women only.

1672.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by MRS. BOUTELL, in man's clothes.

WOMEN like us (passing for men), you'll cry,
Presume too much upon your secrecy.
There's not a fop in town but will pretend
To know the cheat himself, or by his friend;

* He who drank Burgundy. The drunken bully of the play.—SCOTT.

† Dorset Garden Theatre, where very showy pieces were acted.

Then make no words on't, gallants, 'tis e'en true,
We are condemned to look and strut, like you.
Since we thus freely our hard fate confess,
Accept us, these bad times, in any dress.
You'll find the sweet on't: now old pantaloons
Will go as far as, formerly, new gowns; 10
And from your own cast wigs expect no frowns.
The ladies we shall not so easily please;
They'll say, "What impudent bold things are these,
That dare provoke, yet cannot do us right,
Like men, with huffing looks, that dare not fight!"
But this reproach our courage must not daunt;
The bravest soldier may a weapon want;
Let her that doubts us still send her gallant.
Ladies, in us you'll youth and beauty find,
All things, but one, according to your mind: 20
And when your eyes and ears are feasted here,
Rise up, and make out the short meal elsewhere.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by MRS. REEVE, in man's clothes.

What think you, sirs, was't not all well enough?
Will you not grant that we can strut and huff?
Men may be proud; but faith, for aught I see,
They neither walk nor cock so well as we;
And for the fighting part, we may in time
Grow up to swagger in heroic rhyme;
For though we cannot boast of equal force,
Yet at some weapons men have still the worse.
Why should not then we women act alone?
Or whence are men so necessary grown? 10
Ours are so old, they are as good as none.

Some who have tried them, if you'll take
 their oaths,
 Swear they're as arrant tinsel as their
 clothes.
 Imagine us but what we represent,
 And we could e'en give you as good
 content.
 Our faces, shapes,—all's better than you
 see,
 And for the rest, they want as much as we,
 Oh, would the higher powers be kind to us,
 And grant us to set up a female house!
 We'll make ourselves to please both sexes
 then, 20
 To the men women, to the women men.
 Here, we presume, our legs are no ill sight,
 And they will give you no ill dreams at
 night.
 In dreams both sexes must their passion
 ease,
 You make us then as civil as you please.
 This would prevent the Houses joining too,
 At which we are as much displeased as
 you;
 For all our women most devoutly swear,
 Each would be rather a poor actress here
 Than to be made a Mamamouchi * there.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
 "MARRIAGE-A-LA-MODE."

1672-1673.

PROLOGUE.

LORD, how reformed and quiet are we
 grown,
 Since all our braves and all our wits are
 gone!
 Pop-corner now is free from civil war,
 White-wig and vizard make no longer jar.

* An absurd title, supposed to be Turkish,
 given to Mr. Jourdain in Molière's "Bourgeois
 Gentilhomme."

France and the fleet have swept the town so
 clear,
 That we can act in peace, and you can
 hear.
 'Twas a sad sight, before they marched
 from home,
 To see our warriors in red waistcoats
 come, 10
 With hair tucked up, into our tiring-room.
 But 'twas more sad to hear their last
 adieu:
 The women sobbed, and swore they would
 be true;
 And so they were, as long as e'er they
 could;
 But powerful guineas cannot be withstood,
 And they were made of playhouse flesh and
 blood.
 Fate did their friends for double use ordain;
 In wars abroad they grinning honour gain,
 And mistresses, for all that stay, maintain.
 Now they are gone, 'tis dead vacation
 here, 20
 For neither friends nor enemies appear.
 Poor pensive punk now peeps ere plays
 begin,
 Sees the bare bench, and dares not venture
 in;
 But manages her last half-crown with care,
 And trudges to the Mall on foot for air.
 Our city friends so far will hardly roam,
 They can take up with pleasures nearer
 home;
 And see gay shows with gaudy scenes else-
 where;
 For we presume they seldom come to hear.
 But they have now taken up a glorious
 trade, 30
 And cutting Morecraft* struts in masquerade.
 There's all our hope, for we shall show
 to-day
 A masquing ball, to recommend our play;
 Nay, to endear them more, and let them
 see
 We scorn to come behind in courtesy,

* A usurer. See the translation of the second
 Epode of Horace

We'll follow the new mode which they
begin,
And treat them with a room, and couch
within :
For that's one way, howe'er the play fall
short,
To oblige the town, the city, and the court.

EPILOGUE.

Thus have my spouse and I informed the
nation,
And led you all the way to reformation ;
Not with dull morals, gravely writ, like
those
Which men of easy phlegm with care
compose,—
Your poets, of stiff words and limber sense,
Born on the confines of indifference :
But by examples drawn, I dare to say,
From most of you who see and hear the
play :
There are more Rhodophils in this theatre,
More Palamedes, and some few wives, I
fear. 10
But yet too far our poet would not run ;
Though 'twas well offered, there was
nothing done.
He would not quite the women's frailty
bare,
But stript them to the waist, and left them
there :
And the men's faults were less severely
shown,
For he considers that himself is one.—
Some stabbing wits, to bloody satire bent,
Would treat both sexes with less compli-
ment ;
Would lay the scene at home ; of husbands
tell,
For wenches taking up their wives in the
Mall ; 20
And a brisk bout, which each of them did
want,
Made by mistake of mistress and gallant.
Our modest author thought it was enough
To cut you off a sample of the stuff :

He spared my shame, which you, I'm sure,
would not,
For you were all for driving on the plot :
You sighed when I came in to break the
sport,
And set your teeth when each design fell
short.
To wives and servants all good wishes lend,
But the poor cuckold seldom finds a friend.
Since, therefore, court and town will take
no pity, 30
I humbly cast myself upon the city.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
"THE ASSIGNATION,
OR LOVE IN A NUNNERY."

1672-1673.

PROLOGUE.

PROLOGUES, like bells to churches, toll
you in
With chiming 'verse, till the dull plays
begin ;
With this sad difference though of pit and
pew,
You damn the poet, but the priest damns
you :
But priests can treat you at your own
expense,
And gravely call you fools without offence.
Poets, poor devils, have ne'er your folly
shown,
But to their cost you proved it was their
own :
For when a fop's presented on the stage,
Straight all the coxcombs in the town
engage, 19
For his deliverance and revenge they join,
And grunt, like hogs, about their captive
swine.
Your poets daily split upon this shelf :—
You must have fools, yet none will have
himself.

Or if in kindness you that leave would give,
No man could write you at that rate you
live :

For some of you grow fops with so much
haste,
Riot in nonsense, and commit such waste,
'Twould ruin poets should they spend so
fast.

He who made this, observed what farces
hit, ²⁰

And durst not disoblige you now with wit.
But, gentlemen, you overdo the mode ;
You must have fools out of the common
road.

The unnatural strained buffoon is only
taking ;

No fop can please you now of God's own
making.

Pardon our poet, if he speaks his mind ;
You come to plays with your own follies
lined :

Small fools fall on you, like small showers,
in vain ;

Your own oiled coats keep out all common
rain.

You must have Mamamouchi, such a fop ³⁰
As would appear a monster in a shop ;
He'll fill your pit and boxes to the brim,
Where, rammed in crowds, you see your-
selves in him.

Sure there's some spell our poet never knew,
In *Hullibabillahde*, and *Chu, chu, chu* ;
But *Marabarah sahem* most did touch you ;
That is, "Oh how we love the Mama-
mouchi !"

Grimace and habit sent you pleased away ;
You damned the poet, and cried up the
play.

This thought had made our author more
uneasy, ⁴⁰

But that he hopes I'm fool enough to
please ye.

But here's my grief,—though nature, joined
with art,

Have cut me out to act a fooling part,
Yet, to your praise, the few wits here will
say,

'Twas imitating you taught Haynes to play.

EPILOGUE.

Some have expected, from our bills to-
day,

To find a satire in our poet's play.

The zealous rout from Coleman Street did
run,

To see the story of the Friar and Nun ;
Or tales, yet more ridiculous, to hear,
Vouched by their vicar of ten pound a-
year,

Of nuns who did against temptation pray,
And discipline laid on the pleasant way ;
Or that, to please the malice of the town,
Our poet should in some close cell have
shown ¹⁰

Some sister, playing at content alone.
This they did hope ; the other side did
fear ;

And both, you see, alike are cozened here,
Some thought the title of our play to blame ;
They liked the thing, but yet abhorred the
name :

Like modest punks, who all you ask afford,
But for the world they would not name that
word.

Yet, if you'll credit what I heard him say,
Our poet meant no scandal in his play !
His nuns are good, which on the stage are
shown, ²⁰

And sure, behind our scenes you'll look for
none.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"AMBOYNA,

OR THE CRUELITIES OF THE DUTCH
TO THE ENGLISH."

1673-1673.

PROLOGUE.

As needy gallants in the scriveners' hands,
Court the rich knave that gripes their mort-
gaged lands,

The first fat buck of all the season's sent,
And keeper takes no fee in compliment :

The dotage of some Englishmen is such,
To fawn on those who ruin them—the
Dutch.

They shall have all, rather than make a
war

With those who of the same religion are.

The Straits, the Guinea trade, the herrings
too,

Nay, to keep friendship, they shall pickle
you. ¹⁰

Some are resolved not to find out the
cheat,

But, cuckold-like, love him who does the
feat :

What injuries soe'er upon us fall,

Yet, still, the same religion answers all :

Religion wheedled you to civil war,

Drew English blood, and Dutchmen's now
would spare :

Be gulled no longer, for you'll find it true,

They have no more religion, faith—than
you ;

Interest's the god they worship in their
state ;

And you, I take it, have not much of
that. ²⁰

Well, monarchies may own religion's name,
But states are atheists in their very frame.

They share a sin, and such proportions
fall,

That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.

How they love England, you shall see this
day ;

No map shows Holland truer than our
play :

Their pictures and inscriptions well we
know ;

We may be bold one medal sure to show.

View then their falsehoods, rapine, cruelty ;
And think what once they were, they still
would be : ³⁰

But hope not either language, plot, or
art ;

"Twas writ in haste, but with an English
heart :

And least hope wit ; in Dutchmen that
would be

As much improper, as would honesty.

EPILOGUE.

A POET once the Spartans led to fight,
And made them conquer in the Muses' right ;
So would our poet lead you on this day,
Showing your tortured fathers in his play.

To one well-born the affront is worse, and
more

When he's abused, and baffled by a boor :
With an ill grace the Dutch their mis-
chiefs do,

They've both ill-nature and ill-manners too.
Well may they boast themselves an ancient
nation,

For they were bred ere manners were in
fashion ; ¹⁰

And their new commonwealth has set them
free,

Only from honour and civility.

Venetians do not more uncouthly ride,
Than did their lubber state mankind be-
stride ;

Their sway became them with as ill a mien,
As their own paunches swell above their
chin :

Yet is their empire no true growth, but
humour,

And only two kings' touch can cure the
tumour.

As Cato did his Afric fruits display,
So we before your eyes their Indies lay ; ²⁰

All loyal English will, like him, conclude,
Let Cæsar live, and Carthage be subdued !

PROLOGUE SPOKEN AT

THE OPENING OF THE
NEW HOUSE.*

MARCH 26, 1674-1684.

A PLAIN built house, after so long a stay,
Will send you half unsatisfied away ;

When, fall'n from your expected pomp,
you find

A bare convenience only is designed.

* Drury Lane Theatre was burnt down in
1671 or 1672. It was rebuilt on a plan furnished

You, who each day can theatres behold,
Like Nero's palace, shining all with gold,
Our mean ungilded stage will scorn, we
fear,

And, for the homely room, disdain the
cheer.

Yet now cheap druggets to a mode are
grown,

And a plain suit, since we can make but
one, ¹⁰

Is better than to be by tarnished gaudry
known.

They, who are by your favours wealthy
made,

With mighty sums may carry on the trade :
We, broken bankers, half destroyed by
fire,

With our small stock to humble roofs
retire :

Pity our loss, while you their pomp admire.
For fame and honour we no longer strive,
We yield in both, and only beg to live :

Unable to support their vast expense,
Who build and treat with such magnifi-
cence ; ²⁰

That, like the ambitious monarchs of the
age,

They give the law to our provincial stage.
Great neighbours enviously promote excess,
While they impose their splendour on the
less.

But only fools, and they of vast estate,
The extremity of modes will imitate,
The dangling knee-fringe, and the bib-
cravat.

Yet if some pride with want may be allowed,
We in our plainness may be justly proud :
Our royal master willed it should be so ; ³⁰
What'er he's pleased to own, can need no
show :

That sacred name gives ornament and
grace,

And, like his stamp, makes basest metals
pass,

'Twere folly now a stately pile to raise,
To build a playhouse while you throw
down plays,

While scenes, machines, and empty operas
reign,

And for the pencil you the pen, disdain :
While troops of famished Frenchmen hither
drive,

And laugh at those upon whose alms they
live :

Old English authors vanish and give
place ⁴⁰

To these new conquerors of the Norman
race.

More tamely than your fathers you submit ;
You're now grown vassals to them in your wit.
Mark, when they play, how our fine fops
advance

The mighty merits of their men of France,
Keep time, cry "Bon," and humour the
cadence.

Well, please yourselves ; but sure 'tis under-
stood,

That French machines have ne'er done
England good.

I would not prophesy our house's fate :
But while vain shows and scenes you over-
rate, ⁵⁰

'Tis to be feared——

That as a fire the former house o'erthrew,
Machines and tempests will destroy the
new.

EPILOGUE.

Though what our prologue said was sadly
true,

Yet, gentlemen, our homely house is new,
A charm that seldom fails with wicked you.
A country lip may have the velvet touch ;
Though she's no lady, you may think her
such :

A strong imagination may do much.
But you, loud sirs, who through your curls
look big,

Critics in plume and white vallancy wig,
Who lolling on our foremost benches sit,
And still charge first, the true forlorn of
wit ; ¹⁰

by Sir Christopher Wren. It was plainer and simpler than the Dorset Gardens Theatre, which D'Avenant had fitted up splendidly and showily.

Whose favours, like the sun, warm where
 you roll,
 Yet you, like him, have neither heat nor
 soul;
 So may your hats your foretops never press,
 Untouched your ribbons, sacred be your
 dress;
 So may you slowly to old age advance,
 And have the excuse of youth for ignor-
 ance,
 So may Pop-Corner full of noise remain,
 And drive far off the dull, attentive train;
 So may your midnight scourgings happy
 prove,
 And morning batteries force your way to
 love; 20
 So may not France your warlike hands
 recall,
 But leave you by each other's swords to fall,*
 As you come here to ruffle vizard punk,
 When sober rail, and roar when you are
 drunk.
 But to the wits we can some merit plead,
 And urge what by themselves has oft been
 said:
 Our house relieves the ladies from the
 frights
 Of ill-paved streets, and long dark winter
 nights;
 The Flanders horses from a cold bleak road,
 Where bears in furs dare scarcely look
 abroad; 30
 The audience from worn plays, and fustian
 stuff
 Of rhyme, more nauseous than three boys
 in buff.
 Though in their house the poets' heads
 appear,
 We hope we may presume their wits are
 here.

* This seems to be an allusion to the recent death of Mr. Scroop, a man of fortune, who about this time was stabbed in the theatre at Dorset Gardens by Sir Thomas Armstrong, afterwards the confidential friend of the Duke of Monmouth.—SCOTT. It happened during the representation of *Macbeth*.

Mr. Scroop was removed from the theatre, but died almost immediately afterwards.

The best which they reserved they now
 will play,
 For, like kind cuckolds, though we have
 not the way
 To please, we'll find you abler men who may.
 If they should fail, for last recruits we breed
 A troop of frisking Monsieurs to succeed.
 (You know the French sure cards at time
 of need.) 40

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

1674-1684.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by MR. HART.

POETS, your subjects, have their parts as-
 signed
 To unbend, and to divert their sovereign's
 mind:
 When tired with following nature, you
 think fit
 To seek repose in the cool shades of wit,
 And, from the sweet retreat, with joy survey
 What rests, and what is conquered of the
 way.
 Here, free yourselves from envy, care, and
 strife,
 You view the various turns of human life:
 Safe in our scene, through dangerous courts,
 you go, 10
 And, undebauched, the vice of cities know.
 Your theories are here to practice brought,
 As in mechanic operations wrought;
 And man, the little world, before you set,
 As once the sphere of crystal showed the
 great.
 Blest sure are you above all mortal kind,
 If to your fortunes you can suit your mind:
 Content to see, and shun, those ills we
 show,
 And crimes on theatres alone to know.
 With joy we bring what our dead authors
 writ,
 And beg from you the value of their wit: 20

That Shakspeare's, Fletcher's, and great
Jonson's claim
May be renewed from those who gave them
fame.

None of our living poets dare appear ;
For Muses so severe are worshipped here,
That, conscious of their faults, they shun
the eye,

And, as profane, from sacred places fly,
Rather than see the offended God, and die.
We bring no imperfections, but our own ;
Such faults as made are by the makers
shown :

And you have been so kind, that we may
boast, ²⁰

The greatest judges still can pardon most.
Poets must stoop, when they would please
our pit,

Debased even to the level of their wit ;
Disdaining that, which yet they know will
take,
Hating themselves what their applause must
make.

But when to praise from you they would
aspire,
Though they like eagles mount, your Jove
is higher.

So far your knowledge all their power
transcends,
As what should be beyond what is extends.

EPILOGUE.

Oft has our poet wished, this happy seat
Might prove his fading Muse's last retreat :
I wondered at his wish, but now I find
He sought for quiet, and content of mind ;
Which noiseful towns and courts can never
know,

And only in the shades, like laurels, grow.
Youth, ere it sees the world, here studies
rest,

And age, returning thence, concludes it
best.

What wonder if we court that happiness,
Yearly to share, which hourly you possess ;
Teaching even you, while the vexed world
we show, ¹⁰
Your peace to value more, and better know.

'Tis all we can return for favours past,
Whose holy memory shall ever last,
For patronage from him whose care pre-
sides

O'er every noble art, and every science
guides :

Bathurst, a name the learned with reverence
know,

And scarcely more to his own Virgil owe ;
Whose age enjoys but what his youth de-
served,

To rule those Muses whom before he
served. ²⁰

His learning, and untainted manners too,
We find, Athenians, are derived to you ;

Such ancient hospitality there rests
In yours, as dwelt in the first Grecian
breasts,

Whose kindness was religion to their guests.
Such modesty did to our sex appear,
As, had there been no laws, we need not
fear,

Since each of you was our protector here.
Converse so chaste, and so strict virtue
shown,

As might Apollo with the Muses own. ³⁰
Till our return, we must despair to find
Judges so just, so knowing, and so kind.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
"A U R E N G E Z E B E."

1675-1676.

PROLOGUE.

OUR author, by experience, finds it true,
'Tis much more hard to please himself
than you ;

And out of no feigned modesty, this day
Damns his laborious trifle of a play.

Not that it's worse than what before he
writ,

But he has now another taste of wit ;
And, to confess a truth, though out of time,
Grows weary of his long-loved mistress,
Rhyme.

Passion's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
And nature flies him like enchanted
ground : 10

What verse can do, he has performed in
this,
Which he presumes the most correct of
his ;

But spite of all his pride, a secret shame
Invades his breast at Shakspeare's sacred
name :

Awed when he hears his godlike Romans
rage,

He, in a just despair, would quit the stage ;
And to an age less polished, more unskilled,
Does, with disdain, the foremost honours
yield.

As with the greater dead he dares not
strive,

He would not match his verse with those
who live : 20

Let him retire, betwixt two ages cast,
The first of this, and hindmost of the last.
A losing gamester, let him sneak away ;
He bears no ready money from the play.
The fate, which governs poets, thought it
fit

He should not raise his fortunes by his wit.
The clergy thrive, and the litigious bar ;
Dull heroes fatten with the spoils of war ;
All southern vices, Heaven be praised, are
here ;

But wit's a luxury you think too dear. 30
When you to cultivate the plant are loth,
'Tis a shrewd sign, 'twas never of your
growth ;

And wit in northern climates will not
blow,
Except, like orange-trees, 'tis housed from
snow.

There needs no care to put a playhouse
down,

'Tis the most desert place of all the town :
We and our neighbours, to speak proudly,
are,

Like monarchs, ruined with expensive war ;
While, like wise English, unconcerned you
sit,

And see us play the tragedy of wit. 40

EPILOGUE.

A pretty task ! and so I told the fool,
Who needs would undertake to please by
rule :

He thought that, if his characters were
good,

The scenes entire, and freed from noise
and blood ;

The action great, yet circumscribed by
time,

The words not forced, but sliding into
rhyme,

The passions raised and calmed by just
degrees,

As tides are swelled, and then retire to seas ;
He thought in hitting these his business
done,

Though he perhaps has failed in every
one ; 10

But after all, a poet must confess,
His art's, like physic, but a happy guess.

Your pleasure on your fancy must depend :
The lady's pleased, just as she likes her
friend.

No song ! no dance ! no show ! he fears
you'll say ;

You love all naked beauties, but a play.
He much mistakes your methods to delight ;

And, like the French, abhors our target
fight :

But those damned dogs can ne'er be in
the right.

True English hate your Monsieur's paltry
arts, 20

For you are all silk-weavers in your hearts.
Bold Britons, at a brave Bear-garden fray,
Are roused ; and, clattering sticks, cry,
Play, play, play !

Meantime, your filthy foreigner will stare,
And mutter to himself, *Ha, gens barbare !*
And, gad, 'tis well he mutters ; well for
him ;

Our butchers else would tear him limb from
limb.

'Tis true, the time may come, your sons
may be

Infected with this French civility :

But this in after ages will be done : 30
 Our poet writes an hundred years too soon,
 This age comes on too slow, or he too fast ;
 And early springs are subject to a blast.
 Who would excel, when few can make a test
 Betwixt indifferent writing and the best ?
 For favours cheap and common who would strive,
 Which, like abandoned prostitutes, you give ?
 Yet scattered here and there I some behold,
 Who can discern the tinsel from the gold :
 To these he writes ; and if by them allowed, 40
 'Tis their prerogative to rule the crowd.
 For he more fears, like a presuming man,
 Their votes who cannot judge, than theirs who can.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
 "ALL FOR LOVE."

1678-1678.

PROLOGUE.

WHAT flocks of critics hover here to-day,
 As vultures wait on armies for their prey,
 All gaping for the carcase of a play !
 With croaking notes they bode some dire event,
 And follow dying poets by the scent.
 Ours gives himself for gone ; you've watched your time ;
 He fights this day unarmed, without his rhyme,
 And brings a tale which often has been told,
 As sad as Dido's, and almost as old.
 His hero, whom you wits his bully call, 10
 Bates of his mettle, and scarce rants at all ;
 He's somewhat lewd, but a well-meaning mind,
 Weeps much, fights little, but is wondrous kind ;

In short, a pattern and companion fit
 For all the keeping Tonies of the pit.
 I could name more : a wife, and mistress too,
 Both (to be plain) too good for most of you ;
 The wife well-natured, and the mistress true.

Now, poets, if your fame has been his care,

Allow him all the candour you can spare. 20
 A brave man scorns to quarrel once a day,
 Like Hectors in at every petty fray.

Let those find fault whose wit's so very small,

They've need to show that they can think at all,

Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow ;
 He who would search for pearls must dive below.

Fops may have leave to level all they can,
 As pigmies would be glad to lop a man.

Half-wits are fleas, so little and so light,
 We scarce could know they live, but that they bite. 30

But as the rich, when tired with daily feasts,

For change become their next poor tenants' guests ;

Drink hearty draughts of ale from plain brown bowls,

And snatch the homely rasher from the coals,

So you, retiring from much better cheer,
 For once may venture to do penance here.

And since that plenteous autumn now is past,

Whose grapes and peaches have indulged your taste,

Take in good part from our poor poet's board

Such rivelled fruits as winter can afford. 40

EPILOGUE.

Poets, like disputants, when reasons fail,
 Have one sure refuge left—and that's to rail.

Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thundered through the pit ;

And this is all their equipage of wit.

We wonder how the devil this difference
grows,
Betwixt our fools in verse, and yours in
prose ;
For, 'faith, the quarrel rightly understood,
'Tis civil war with their own flesh and
blood.
The threadbare author hates the gaudy
coat ;
And swears at the gilt coach, but swears
a-foot : 10
For 'tis observed of every scribbling man,
He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can ;
Prunes up, and asks his oracle, the glass,
If pink and purple best become his face.
For our poor wretch, he neither rails nor
prays ;
Nor likes your wit just as you like his
plays ;
He has not yet so much of Mr. Bayes.*
He does his best ; and if he cannot
please,
Would quietly sue out his *writ of ease*.
Yet, if he might his own grand jury
call, 20
By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
Let Caesar's power the men's ambition
move.
But grace you him who lost the world for
love !
Yet if some antiquated lady say,
The last age is not copied in his play ;
Heaven help the man who for that face
must drudge,
Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
Let not the young and beauteous join with
those ;
For should you raise such numerous hosts
of foes,
Young wits and sparks he to his aid must
call ; 30
'Tis more than one man's work to please
you all.

* A name given in ridicule to Dryden in "The Rehearsal." "The Critic" is founded on "The Rehearsal."

PROLOGUE TO

"LIMBERHAM."

1678-1678.

TRUE wit has seen its best days long ago ;
It ne'er looked up, since we were dipped
in show ;
When sense in doggerel rhymes and clouds
was lost,
And dulness flourished at the actor's cost.
Nor stopped it here ; when tragedy was
done,
Satire and humour the same fate have run,
And comedy is sunk to trick and pun.
Now our machining lumber will not sell.
And you no longer care for heaven or
hell ;
What stuff can please you next, the Lord
can tell. 10
Let them, who the rebellion first began
To wit, restore the monarch, if they can ;
Our author dares not be the first bold
man.
He, like the prudent citizen, takes care
To keep for better marts his staple ware ;
His toys are good enough for Stourbridge
fair.
Tricks were the fashion ; if it now be
spent,
'Tis time enough at Easter to invent ;
No man will make up a new suit for
Lent.
If now and then he takes a small pre-
tence, 20
To forage for a little wit and sense,
Pray pardon him, he meant you no
offence.
Next summer, Nostradamus tells, they
say,
That all the critics shall be shipped away,
And not enough be left to damn a play.
To every sail beside, good heaven, be
kind ;
But drive away that swarm with such a
wind,
That not one locust may be left behind !

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by LIMBERHAM.

I beg a boon, that, ere you all disband,
Some one would take my bargain off my
hand;

To keep a punk is but a common evil;
To find her false, and marry,—that's the
devil.

Well, I ne'er acted part in all my life,
But still I was fobbed off with some such
wife.

I find the trick; these poets take no pity
Of one that is a member of the city.

We cheat you lawfully, and in our trades;
You cheat us basely, with your common
jades.

Now I am married, I must sit down by it;
But let me keep my dear-bought spouse in
quiet.

Let none of you damned Woodalls of the pit
Put in for shares to mend our breed in
wit;

We know your bastards from our flesh and
blood,

Not one in ten of yours e'er comes to good.
In all the boys their fathers' virtues shine,
But all the female fry turn Pugs,—like
mine.

When these grow up, Lord, with what
rampant gadders

Our counters will be thronged, and roads
with padders!

This town two bargains has, not worth one
farthing,

A Smithfield horse, and wife of Covent
Garden.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"ÆDIPUS."

WHEN Athens all the Grecian states did
guide,

And Greece gave laws to all the world
beside;

Then Sophocles with Socrates did sit,
Supreme in wisdom one, and one in wit:

And wit from wisdom differed not in those,
But, as 'twas sung in verse, or said in
prose.

Then, Ædipus, on crowded theatres,
Drew all admiring eyes and listening ears:
The pleased spectator shouted every line,
The noblest, manliest, and the best design!
And every critic of each learned age,
By this just model has reformed the stage.
Now, should it fail, (as Heaven avert our
fear)

Damn it in silence, lest the world should
hear.

For were it known this poem did not
please,

You might set up for perfect savages:
Your neighbours would not look on you as
men,

But think the nation all turned Picts
again.

Faith, as you manage matters, 'tis not fit
You should suspect yourselves of too much
wit:

Drive not the jest too far, but spare this
piece;

And, for this once, be not more wise than
Greece.

See twice! do not pell-mell to damning
fall,

Like true-born Britons, who ne'er think
at all:

Pray be advised; and though at Mons you
won,

On pointed cannon do not always run.

With some respect to ancient wit proceed;
You take the four first councils for your
creed.

But, when you lay tradition wholly by,
And on the private spirit alone rely,
You turn fanatics in your poetry.

If, notwithstanding all that we can say,
You needs will have your pen'orths of the
play,

And come resolved to damn, because you
pay,

Record it, in memorial of the fact,
The first play buried since the woollen
act.

EPILOGUE.

What Sophocles could undertake alone,
 Our poets found a work for more than one ;
 And therefore two lay tugging at the piece,
 With all their force, to draw the ponderous
 mass from Greece ;
 A weight that bent even Seneca's strong
 Muse,
 And which Corneille's shoulders did refuse.
 So hard it is the Athenian harp to string !
 So much two consuls yield to one just king.
 Terror and pity this whole poem sway ;
 The mightiest machines that can mount a
 play. 10
 How heavy will those vulgar souls be
 found,
 Whom two such engines cannot move from
 ground !
 When Greece and Rome have smiled upon
 this birth,
 You can but damn for one poor spot of
 earth :
 And when your children find your judgment
 such,
 They'll scorn their sires, and wish them-
 selves born Dutch ;
 Each haughty poet will infer with ease,
 How much his wit must under-write to
 please.
 As some strong churl would, brandishing,
 advance
 The monumental sword that conquered
 France ; 20
 So you, by judging this, your judgment
 teach,
 Thus far you like, that is, thus far you
 reach.
 Since then the vote of full two thousand
 years
 Has crowned this plot, and all the dead
 are theirs,
 Think it a debt you pay, not alms you give,
 And, in your own defence, let this Play live.
 Think them not vain, when Sophocles is
 shown,
 To praise his worth they humbly doubt
 their own.

Yet as weak states each other's power
 assure,
 Weak poets by conjunction are secure. 30
 Their treat is what your palates relish most,
 Charm ! song ! and show ! a murder and
 a ghost !
 We know not what you can desire or hope,
 To please you more, but burning of a Pope.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"TROILUS AND CRESSIDA."

1679-1679.

PROLOGUE.

*Spoken by MR. BETTERTON, representing
 the Ghost of Shakspeare.*

SEE, my loved Britons, see your Shaks-
 peare rise,
 An awful ghost confessed to human eyes !
 Unnamed, methinks, distinguished I had
 been
 From other shades, by this eternal green,
 About whose wreaths the vulgar poets
 strive,
 And with a touch, their withered bays
 revive.
 Untaught, unpractised, in a barbarous age,
 I found not, but created first the stage.
 And, if I drained no Greek or Latin store,
 'Twas, that my own abundance gave me
 more. 10
 On foreign trade I needed not rely,
 Like fruitful Britain, rich without supply.
 In this my rough-drawn play you shall
 behold
 Some master-strokes, so manly and so
 bold,
 That he who meant to alter, found 'em such,
 He shook, and thought it sacrilege to touch.
 Now, where are the successors to my name ?
 What bring they to fill out a poet's fame ?
 Weak, short-lived issues of a feeble age ;
 Scarce living to be christened on the
 stage ! 20

For humour farce, for love they rhyme
 dispense,
 That tolls the knell for their departed
 sense.
 Dulness might thrive in any trade but this :
 'Twould recommend to some fat benefice.
 Dulness, that in a playhouse meets disgrace,
 Might meet with reverence in its proper
 place.
 The fulsome clench, that nauseates the
 town,
 Would from a judge or alderman go down,
 Such virtue is there in a robe and gown !
 And that insipid stuff which here you hate 20
 Might somewhere else be called a grave
 debate ;
 Dulness is decent in the church and state.
 But I forget that still 'tis understood,
 Bad plays are best decried by showing
 good.
 Sit silent then, that my pleased soul may see
 A judging audience once and worthy me ;
 My faithful scene from true records shall
 tell,
 How Trojan valour did the Greek excel ;
 Your great forefathers shall their fame
 regain,
 And Homer's angry ghost repine in vain. 40

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by THERSITES.

These cruel critics put me into passion,
 For in their lowering looks I read damna-
 tion :
 You expect a satire, and I seldom fail ;
 When I'm first beaten, 'tis my part to rail.
 You British fools of the old Trojan stock,*
 That stand so thick one cannot miss the
 flock,
 Poets have cause to dread a keeping pit,
 When women's cullies come to judge of wit.
 As we strew ratsbane when we vermin fear,
 'Twere worth the cost to scatter foolbane
 here ; 10

* It was a legendary belief that the British
 were descended from Brutus, the son or grandson
 of Æneas.

And after all our judging fops were served,
 Dull poets, too, should have a dose re-
 served :
 Such reprobates, as, past all sense of
 shaming,
 Write on, and ne'er are satisfied with
 damning ;
 Next, those, to whom the stage does not
 belong,
 Such whose vocation only is—to song,
 At most to prologue ; whom for want of
 time
 Poets take in for journey-work in rhyme.
 But I want curses for those mighty shoals
 Of scribbling Chlorises, and Phyllis fools : 20
 Those oafs should be restrained, during
 their lives,
 From pen and ink, as madmen are from
 knives.
 I could rail on, but 'twere a task as vain
 As preaching truth at Rome or wit in
 Spain :
 Yet to huff out our play was worth my
 trying ;
 John Lilburn scaped his judges by defying.
 If guilty, yet I'm sure of the Church's
 blessing,
 By suffering for the Plot without confessing.

PROLOGUE TO

"THE SPANISH FRIAR,
 OR THE DOUBLE DISCOVERY."

1681-1682.

Now luck for us and a kind hearty pit,
 For he who pleases never fails of wit :
 Honour is yours ; —
 And you, like kings at city treats, bestow it ;
 The writer kneels, and is bid rise a poet.
 But you are fickle sovereigns, to our sorrow,
 You dub to-day, and hang a man to-
 morrow ;
 You cry the same sense up, and down
 again,
 Just like brass money once a year in Spain.

Take you in the mood, whate'er base metal
come,

You coin as fast as groats at Birmingham;*
Though 'tis no more like sense in ancient
plays

Than Rome's religion like St. Peter's days.
In short, so swift your judgments turn and
wind,

You cast our fleetest wits a mile behind.
'Twere well your judgments but in plays
did range,

But even your follies and debauches change
With such a whirl, the poets of your age
Are tired, and cannot score them on the
stage,

Unless each vice in short-hand they in-
dite,

Even as notched prentices whole sermons
write.

The heavy Hollanders no vices know,
But what they used a hundred years ago;
Like honest plants, where they were stuck,
they grow.

They cheat, but still from cheating sires
they come;

They drink, but they were christened first
in mum.

Their patrimonial sloth the Spaniards keep,
And Philip first taught Philip how to sleep.
The French and we still change; but here's
the curse,

They change for better, and we change for
worse;

They take up our old trade of conquering,
And we are taking theirs, to dance and sing:
Our fathers did for change, to France re-
pair,

And they for change will try our English
air.

As children, when they throw one toy away,
Straight a more foolish gewgaw comes in
play;

So we, grown penitent on serious thinking,
Leave whoring, and devoutly fall to drink-
ing.

Scouring the watch grows out-of-fashion
wit;

Now we set up for tilting in the pit,
Where 'tis agreed by bullies chicken-
hearted,

To fright the ladies first, and then be
parted.

A fair attempt has twice or thrice been
made,

To hire night murderers, and make death
a trade.†

When murder's out, what vice can we ad-
vance,

Unless the new-found poisoning trick of
France?‡

And, when their art of ratsbane we have
got,

By way of thanks, we'll send them o'er our
Plot.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"THE DUKE OF GUISE."

1682-1683.

OUR play's a parallel; the Holy League
Begot our Covenant; Guisards got the
Whig;

Whate'er our hot-brained sheriffs did
advance,

Was, like our fashions, first produced in
France;

And, when worn out, well scourged, and
banished there,

Sent over, like their godly beggars, here.
Could the same trick, twice played, our
nation gull?

It looks as if the devil were grown dull;
Or served us up, in scorn, his broken meat,
And thought we were not worth a better
cheat.

. 10

* Birmingham was notorious for coining false money.

† Of these there were many instances at the time.

‡ Alluding to the dreadful "Poudre de Succession." Poisoning was then rife in Paris.

The fulsome Covenant, one would think in reason,

Had given us all our bellies full of treason ;
And yet, the name but changed, our nasty nation

Chaws its own excrement, the Association.*
'Tis true, we have not learned their poisoning way,

For that's a mode but newly come in play ;
Besides, your drug's uncertain to prevail,
But your true Protestant can never fail
With that compendious instrument, a flail.†
Go on, and bite, even though the hook lies bare ;

Twice in one age expel the lawful heir ;
Once more decide religion by the sword,
And purchase for us a new tyrant-lord.

Pray for your king, but yet your purses spare ;
Make him not twopence richer by your prayer.

To show you love him much, chastise him more,

And make him very great, and very poor.
Push him to wars, but still no pence advance ;

Let him lose England to recover France.
Cry freedom up with popular noisy votes, ‡
And get enough to cut each other's throats.

Lop all the rights that fence your monarch's throne ;

For fear of too much power, pray leave him none.

A noise was made of arbitrary sway ;
But, in revenge, you Whigs have found a way

An arbitrary duty now to pay.

Let his own servants turn to save their stake ;

Glean from his plenty, and his wants forsake ;

* The Association proposed in Parliament was by the royalists said to be a revival of the Solemn League and Covenant ; but the draught of an Association found in Lord Shaftesbury's Cabinet, and produced on his trial, in which that memorable engagement seems to have been pretty closely copied, was probably what our poet alludes to.—SCOTT.

† A sort of bludgeon in use with the Whigs. It would fold up to lie in the pocket.

But let some Judas near his person stay,
To swallow the last sop, and then betray. †

Make London independent of the Crown,
A realm apart ; the kingdom of the town.

Let ignoramus juries find no traitors,
And ignoramus poets scribble satires,
And, that your meaning none may fail to scan,

Do what in coffee-houses you began ;—
Pull down the master, and set up the man.

EPILOGUE.

Much time and trouble this poor play has cost ;

And faith, I doubted once the cause was lost.

Yet no one man was meant, nor great nor small ;

Our poets, like frank gamesters, threw at all.
They took no single aim :—

But, like bold boys, true to their prince and hearty,

Huzzaed, and fired broadsides at the whole party.

Duels are crimes ; but, when the cause is right,

In battle every man is bound to fight.

For what should hinder me to sell my skin

Dear as I could, if once my hand were in ?
Se defendendo never was a sin.

'Tis a fine world, my masters ! right or wrong,

The Whigs must talk, and Tories hold their tongue.

They must do all they can,

But we, forsooth, must bear a Christian mind,

And fight, like boys, with one hand tied behind ;

Nay, and when one boy's down, 'twere wondrous wise

To cry,—“ Box fair, and give him time to rise.”

† An allusion to Shaftesbury's acquittal by the Grand Jury.

When Fortune favours, none but fools will
dally ; 20

Would any of you sparks, if Nan or Mally
Tipped you the inviting wink, stand, shall
I, shall I ?

A Trimmer * cried (that heard me tell this
story),

"Fie, Mistress Cook ! faith, you're too
rank a Tory !

Wish not Whigs hanged, but pity their hard
cases ;

You women love to see men make wry
faces."—

"Pray, sir," said I, "don't think me such a
Jew ;

I say no more, but give the devil his due."—

"Lenitives," says he, "best suit with our
condition."—

"Jack Ketch," says I, "'s an excellent
physician."— 30

"I love no blood."—"Nor I, sir, as I
breathe ;

But hanging is a fine dry kind of death."—

"We Trimmers are for holding all things
even."—

"Yes ; just like him that hung 'twixt hell
and heaven."—

"Have we not had men's lives enough
already?"—

"Yes, sure : but you're for holding all things
steady.

Now since the weight hangs all on one side,
brother,

You Trimmers should, to poise it, hang on
t' other."

Damned neuters, in their middle way of
steering,

Are neither fish nor flesh, nor good red-
herring : 40

Not Whigs, nor Tories they ; nor this, nor
hat ;

Nor birds, nor beasts ; but just a kind of bat :

* The Trimmers were a small and unpopular party who kept between the Whigs and Tories, and were headed by Halifax, who repeatedly prevented the two parties from subjugating each other. Charles had great confidence in him. They might perhaps somewhat resemble the Independent members of the present day.

A twilight animal, true to neither cause,
With Tory wings, but Whiggish teeth and
claws.

ANOTHER EPILOGUE.†

*Intended to have been spoken to the Play
before it was forbidden last summer.*

Two houses joined, two poets to a play ?
You noisy Whigs will sure be pleased to-
day ;

It looks so like two shrieves the city way.
But since our discords and divisions cease,
You, bilboa-gallants, learn to keep the
peace ;

Make here no tilts ; let our poor stage
alone ;

Or if a decent murder must be done,
Pray take a civil turn to Marybone.‡
If not, I swear we'll pull up all our
benches ;

Not for your sakes, but for our orange-
wenches : 10

For you thrust wide sometimes, and many
a spark,

That misses one, can hit the other mark.
This makes our boxes full ; for men of
sense

Pay their four shillings in their own de-
fence ;

That safe behind the ladies they may stay,
Peep o'er the fan, and judge the bloody
fray.

But other foes give beauty worse alarms ;
The *posse-poetarum's* up in arms :

No woman's fame their libels has escaped ;
Their ink runs venom, and their pens are
clapped. 20

When sighs and prayers their ladies cannot
move,

They rail, write treason, and turn Whigs
to love.

Nay, and I fear they worse designs
advance,

There's a damned love-trick new brought
o'er from France.

† Printed for the first time in Cooke's edition.
‡ Marybone Garden.

We charm in vain, and dress, and keep
 a pother,
 While those false rogues are ogling one
 another.
 All sins besides admit some expiation;
 But this against our sex is plain damnation.
 They join for libels too, these women-
 haters;
 And as they club for love, they club for
 satires: 30
 The best on't is they hurt not: for they
 wear
 Stings in their tails; their only venom's
 there.
 'Tis true, some shot at first the ladies hit,
 Which able marksmen made and men of
 wit:
 But now the fools give fire, whose bounce
 is louder;
 And yet, like mere train-bands, they shoot
 but powder.
 Libels, like plots, sweep all in their first
 fury;
 Then dwindle like an ignoramus jury:
 Thus age begins with towzing and with
 tumbling,
 But grunts, and groans, and ends at last
 in fumbling. 40

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

1685-1685.

PROLOGUE.

FULL twenty years and more our labour-
 ing stage
 Has lost on this incorrigible age:
 Our poets, the John Ketches of the nation,
 Have seemed to lash ye even to excoriation:
 But still no sign remains; which plainly
 notes
 You bore like heroes, or you bribed like
 Oates.—

What can we do, when mimicking a fop,
 Like beating nut-trees, makes a larger crop?
 Faith, we'll e'en spare our pains, and to
 content you,
 We'll fairly leave you what your Maker
 meant you. 10
 Satire was once your physic, wit your food;
 One nourished not, and t' other drew no
 blood.
 We now prescribe, like doctors in despair,
 The diet your weak appetites can bear.
 Since hearty beef and mutton will not do,
 Here's julep dance, ptisan of song and
 show:
 Give you strong sense, the liquor is too
 heady;
 You're come to farce—that's asses' milk—
 already.
 Some hopeful youths there are of callow
 wit,
 Who one day may be men, if Heaven
 think fit; 20
 Sound may serve such, ere they to sense
 are grown,
 Like leading strings, till they can walk
 alone.
 But yet, to keep our friends in countenance,
 know,
 The wise Italians first invented show;
 Thence into France the noble pageant
 past;
 'Tis England's credit to be cozened last.
 Freedom and zeal have choused you o'er
 and o'er;
 Pray give us leave to bubble you once
 more;
 You never were so cheaply fooled before.
 We bring you change, to humour your dis-
 ease; 30
 Change for the worse has ever used to
 please:
 Then 'tis the mode of France, without
 whose rules
 None must presume to set up here for fools.
 In France, the oldest man is always young,
 Sees operas daily, learns the tunes so long,
 Till foot, hand, head, keep time with every
 song;

Each sings his part, echoing from pit and box,
With his hoarse voice, half harmony, half pox.

Le plus grand roi du monde is always ringing;

They, show themselves good subjects by their singing: 40

On that condition, set up every throat;
You Whigs may sing, for you have changed your note.

Cits and citesses, raise a joyful strain,
'Tis a good omen to begin a reign;
Voices may help your charter to restoring,
And get by singing what you lost by roaring.

EPILOGUE.

After our Æsop's fable shown to-day,
I come to give the moral of the play.
Feigned Zeal, you saw, set out the speedier pace;

But, the last heat, Plain Dealing won the race:

Plain Dealing for a jewel has been known;
But ne'er till now the jewel of a crown.

When Heaven made man, to show the work divine,

Truth was his image, stamped upon the coin;

And when a king is to a god refined,
On all he says and does he stamps his mind. 10

This proves a soul without alloy, and pure;
Kings, like their gold, should every touch endure.

To dare in fields is valour; but how few
Dare be so thoroughly valiant to be true?
The name of Great let other kings affect:
He's great indeed, the prince that is direct.
His subjects know him now, and trust him more

Than all his kings and all their laws before.

What safety could their public acts afford?
Those he can break, but cannot break his word. 20

So great a trust to him alone was due;
Well have they trusted whom so well they knew.

The saint who walked on waves securely trod,

While he believed the beckoning of his God;

But when his faith no longer bore him out,

Began to sink, as he began to doubt.

Let us our native character maintain;

'Tis of our growth to be sincerely plain.

To excel in truth we loyally may strive,

Set privilege against prerogative: 30

He plights his faith, and we believe him just:

His honour is to promise, ours to trust.

Thus Britain's basis on a word is laid,

As by a word the world itself was made.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"DON SEBASTIAN."

1690.

PROLOGUE.

THE judge removed, though he's no more my lord,

May plead at bar, or at the council-board:
So may cast poets write; there's no pretension

To argue loss of wit from loss of pension.
Your looks are cheerful; and in all this place

I see not one that wears a damning face.
The British nation is too brave to show
Ignoble vengeance on a vanquished foe.

At least be civil to the wretch imploring;
And lay your paws upon him without roaring. 10

Suppose our poet was your foe before,
Yet now the business of the field is o'er;

'Tis time to let your civil wars alone,
When troops are into winter-quarters gone. 20

Jove was alike to Latian and to Phrygian ;
And you well know a play's of no religion.
Take good advice, and please yourselves
this day ;

No matter from what hands you have the
play.

Among good fellows every health will
pass,

That serves to carry round another glass : 20
When with full bowls of Burgundy you
dine,

Though at the mighty monarch you repine,
You grant him still most Christian in his
wine.

Thus far the poet ; but his brains grow
addle,

And all the rest is purely from his noddle.
You've seen young ladies at the senate-
door

Prefer petitions, and your grace implore ;
However grave the legislators were,
Their cause went ne'er the worse for being
fair.

Reasons as weak as theirs, perhaps, I
bring ; 30

But I could bribe you with as good a thing.
I heard him make advances of good nature,
That he for once would sheathe his cutting
satire ;

Sign but his peace, he vows he'll ne'er
again

The sacred names of fops and beaux
profane.

Strike up the bargain quickly ; for, I swear,
As times go now, he offers very fair.

Be not too hard on him with statutes
neither ;

Be kind, and do not set your teeth to-
gether

To stretch the laws, as cobblers do their
leather. 40

Horses by Papists are not to be ridden,
But sure the Muses' horse* was ne'er for-
bidden ;

For in no rate-book it was ever found
That Pegasus was valued at five pound :
Fine him to daily drudging and inditing :
And let him pay his taxes out in writing.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken betwixt ANTONIO and MORAYMA.

Mor. I quaked at heart, for fear the
royal fashion

Should have seduced us two to separa-
tion :

To be drawn in, against our own desire,
Poor I to be a nun, poor you a friar.

Ant. I trembled, when the old man's
hand was in,

He would have proved we were too near
of kin,

Discovering old intrigues of love, like t'
other,

Betwixt my father and thy sinful mother :
To make us sister Turk and Christian
brother.

Mor. Excuse me there ; that league
should have been rather 10

Betwixt your mother and my Mufti father ;
'Tis for my own and my relations' credit,
Your friends should bear the bastard, mine
should get it.

Ant. Suppose us two, Almeyda and
Sebastian,

With incest proved upon us—

Mor. Without question,
Their conscience was too queazy of diges-
tion.

Ant. Thou wouldst have kept the
counsel of thy brother,

And sinned till we repented of each other.

Mor. Beast as you are, on nature's laws
to trample !

'Twere better that we followed their ex-
ample, 20

And since all marriage in repentance ends
'Tis good for us to part while we are friends.

To save a maid's remorses and confusions.
Even leave me now, before we try con-
clusions.

* Pegasus. "Papists might not keep a horse
above the value of £5 (1689). 1st William and
Mary c. 15."—SCOTT.

Ant. To copy their example, first make certain
Of one good hour, like theirs, before our parting;
Make a debauch o'er night of love and madness;
And marry, when we wake, in sober sadness.
Mor. I'll follow no new sects of your inventing.
One night might cost me nine long months' repenting : 30
First wed, and, if you find that life a fetter,
Die when you please; the sooner, Sir, the better.
My wealth would get me love ere I could ask it :
Oh ! there's a strange temptation in the casket.
All these young sharpers would my grace importune,
And make me thundering vows of life and fortune.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"AMPHITRYON,

OR THE TWO SOSIAS."

1690-1690.

PROLOGUE.

THE labouring bee, when his sharp sting is gone,
Forgets his golden work, and turns a drone ;
Such is a satire, when you take away
That rage in which its noble vigour lay.
What gain you, by not suffering him to tease ye ?
He neither can offend you now, nor please ye ?
The honey-bag and venom lay so near,
That both together you resolved to tear ;
And lost your pleasure, to secure your fear.

How can he show his manhood, if you bind him 10
To box, like boys, with one hand tied behind him ?
This is plain levelling of wit ; in which
The poor has all the advantage, not the rich.
The blockhead stands excused, for wanting sense ;
And wits turn blockheads in their own defence.
Yet, though the stage's traffic is undone,
Still Julian's * interloping trade goes on :
Though satire on the theatre you smother,
Yet, in lampoons, you libel one another,
The first produces, still, a second jig ; 20
You whip them out, like school-boys, till they gig ;
And with the same success, our readers guess,
For every one still dwindles to a less,
And much good malice is so meanly drest,
That we would laugh, but cannot find the jest.
If no advice your rhyming rage can stay,
Let not the ladies suffer in the fray :
Their tender sex is privileged from war ;
'Tis not like knights, to draw upon the fair.
What fame expect you from so mean a prize ? 30
We wear no murdering weapons, but our eyes.
Our sex, you know, was after yours designed :
The last perfection of the Maker's mind ;
Heaven drew out all the gold for us, and left your dross behind.
Beauty for valour's best reward he chose ;
Peace, after war ; and after toil, repose.
Hence, ye profane, excluded from our sights ;
And, charmed by day with honour's vain delights
Go, make your best of solitary nights.

* Julian, who styled himself Secretary to the Muses, gained a livelihood by copying and dispersing lampoons at Will's Coffee House.

Recant betimes, 'tis prudence to submit ; 40
 Our sex is still your over-match in wit :
 We never fail with new successful arts
 To make fine fools of you, and all your
 parts.

EPILOGUE.

I'm thinking (and it almost makes me
 mad)
 How sweet a time those heathen ladies had.
 Idolatry was even their gods' own trade :
 They worshipped the fine creatures they
 had made.
 Cupid was chief of all the deities,
 And love was all the fashion in the skies.
 When the sweet nymph held up her lily
 hand,
 Jove was her humble servant at command ;
 The treasury of heaven was ne'er so bare
 But still there was a pension for the fair.
 In all his reign, adultery was no sin ; 10
 For Jove the good example did begin.
 Mark, too, when he usurped the husband's
 name,
 How civilly he saved the lady's fame.
 The secret joys of love he wisely hid ;
 But you, sirs, boast of more than e'er you
 did.
 You tease your cuckolds, to their face
 torment 'em :
 But Jove gave his new honours to content
 him,
 And, in the kind remembrance of the fair,
 On each exalted son bestowed a star. 20
 For these good deeds, as by the date
 appears,
 His godship flourished full two thousand
 years.
 At last, when he and all his priests grew
 old,
 The ladies grew in their devotion cold ;
 And that false worship would no longer
 hold.
 Severity of life did next begin ;
 And always does, when we no more can sin.
 That doctrine, too, so hard in practice lies,
 That the next age may see another rise.

Then, pagan gods may once again suc-
 ceed : 30
 And Jove or Mars be ready, at our need,
 To get young godlings, and so mend our
 breed.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
 "KING ARTHUR,
 OR THE BRITISH WORTHY."*

1691.

PROLOGUE.

SURE there's a dearth of wit in this dull
 town,
 When silly plays so sav'rily go down ;
 As, when clipped money passes, 'tis a sign
 A nation is not over-stocked with coin.
 Happy is he, who in his own defence
 Can write just level to your humble sense ;
 Who higher than your pitch can never go ;
 And doubtless he must creep who writes
 below.
 So have I seen, in hall of knight or lord,
 A weak arm throw on a long shovel-
 board ; 10
 He barely lays his piece, but rubs and
 knocks,
 Secured by weakness not to reach the box.
 A feeble poet will his business do,
 Who, straining all he can, comes up to you :
 For, if you like yourselves, you like him too.
 An ape his own dear image will embrace ;
 An ugly beau adores a hatchet face :
 So, some of you, on pure instinct of nature,
 Are led by kind to admire your fellow-
 creature.
 In fear of which, our house has sent this
 day, 20
 To insure our new-built vessel, called a play ;
 No sooner named, than one cries out,—
 These staggers
 Come in good time, to make more work for
 wagers.

* The music of this opera was by our great
 composer, Purcell.

The town divides, if it will take or no ;
The courtiers bet, the cits, the merchants
too ;

A sign they have but little else to do.

Bets at the first were fool-traps ; where the
wise,

Like spiders, lay in ambush for the flies ;

But now they're grown a common trade for
all,

And actions by the news-book rise and
fall ;

Wits, cheats, and fops are free of Wager-
Hall.

One policy as far as Lyons carries ;

Another, nearer home, sets up for Paris.

Our bets, at last, would even to Rome
extend,

But that the Pope has proved our trusty
friend.

Indeed, it were a bargain worth our money,
Could we insure another Ottoboni.*

Among the rest there are a sharpening set

That pray for us, and yet against us bet.

Sure Heaven itself is at a loss to know

If these would have their prayers be heard,
or no ;

For, in great stakes, we piously suppose,
Men pray but very faintly they may lose.

Leave off these wagers ; for, in conscience
speaking,

The city needs not your new tricks for
breaking :

And if you, gallants, lose, to all appearing,
You'll want an equipage for volunteering ;

While thus, no spark of honour left within ye,
When you should draw the sword, you draw
the guinea.

EPILOGUE.

I've had to-day a dozen *billet-doux*

From fops, and wits, and cits, and Bow
Street beaux :

Some from Whitehall, but from the Temple
more :

A Covent Garden porter brought me four.

* Cardinal Ottoboni became Pope Alexander
VIII. He was friendly to England in politics,
and had just now died.

I have not yet read all ; but, without
feigning,

We maids can make shrewd guesses at your
meaning.

What if, to show your styles, I read them
here ?

Methinks I hear one cry, "O Lord, for-
bear !

No, madam, no ; by Heaven, that's too
severe."

Well then, be safe——

But swear henceforward to renounce all
writing,

And take this solemn oath of my inditing,—
As you love ease, and hate campaigns and
fighting.

Yet, faith, 'tis just to make some few ex-
amples :

What if I showed you one or two for
samples ?

[Pulls out one.

Here one desires my ladyship to meet
At the kind couch above in Bridges Street.

Oh sharpening knave ! that would have—you
know what,

For a poor sneaking treat of chocolate.
[Pulls out another.

Now, in the name of luck, I'll break this
open,

Because I dreamt last night I had a token ;
The superscription is exceeding pretty,

"To the desire of all the town and city."
Now, gallants, you must know, this precious
fop

Is foreman of a haberdasher's shop :
One who devoutly cheats, demure in car-
riage,

And courts me to the holy bands of
marriage ;

But, with a civil innuendo too,
My overplus of love shall be for you. [Reads.

"Madam, I swear your looks are so
divine,

When I set up, your face shall be my
sign :

Though times are hard—to show how I
adore you,

Here's my whole heart, and half a guinea
for you.

But, have a care of beaux ; they're false, my honey ;
And, which is worse, have not one rag of money."

See how maliciously the rogue would wrong ye!

But I know better things of some among ye.
My wisest way will be to keep the stage,
And trust to the good nature of the age :
And he that likes the music and the play 40
Shall be my favourite gallant to-day.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
"CLEOMENES,
OR THE SPARTAN HERO."*

1692.

PROLOGUE.

I THINK, or hope at least, the coast is clear ;
That none but men of wit and sense are here ;
That our Bear-garden friends are all away,
Who bounce with hands and feet, and cry,
Play, play !
Who, to save coach-hire, trudge along the street,
Then print our matted seats with dirty feet ;
Who, while we speak, make love to orange-wenchens,
And, between acts, stand strutting on the benches ;
Where, got a-cock-horse, making vile grimaces,
They to the boxes show their booby faces. 10
A Merry-Andrew such a mob will serve,
And treat them with such wit as they deserve.
Let them go people Ireland, where there's need
Of such new planters, to repair the breed ;
Or to Virginia or Jamaica steer,
But have a care of some French privateer ;

For, if they should become the prize of battle,
They'll take 'em, black and white, for Irish cattle.
Arise, true judges, in your own defence,
Control those foplings, and declare for sense : 20
For, should the fools prevail, they stop not there,
But make their next descent upon the fair.
Then rise, ye fair ; for it concerns you most,
That fools no longer should your favours boast :
'Tis time you should renounce them, for we find
They plead a senseless claim to woman-kind :
Such squires are only fit for country towns,
To stink of ale and dust a stand with clowns ;
Who, to be chosen for the land's protectors,
Tope and get drunk before their wise electors. 30
Let not farce-lovers your weak choice upbraid,
But turn them over to the chamber-maid.
Or, if they come to see our tragic-scenes,
Instruct them what a Spartan hero means :
Teach them how manly passions ought to move,
For such as cannot think can never love ;
And, since they needs will judge the poet's art,
Point them with fescues* to each shining part.
Our author hopes in you ; but still in pain,
He fears your charms will be employed in vain.
You can make fools of wits, we find each hour ; 40
But to make wits of fools is past your power.

* A pointer used in teaching children their letters.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by MRS. BRACEGIRDLE.

This day, the Poet, bloodily inclined,
Has made me die, full sore against my
mind!

Some of you naughty men, I fear, will cry,
"Poor rogue! would I might teach thee
how to die!"

Thanks for your love; but I sincerely say,
I never mean to die your wicked way.

Well, since it is decreed all flesh must go,
(And I am flesh,—at least, for aught you
know,)

I first declare, I die with pious mind,
In perfect charity with all mankind, 10
Next, for my will!—I have in my
dispose

Some certain moveables would please you
beaux;

As, first, my youth; for, as I have been
told,

Some of you, modish sparks, are devilish
old.

My chastity I need not leave among ye;
For to suspect old fops were much to
wrong ye.

You swear you're sinners; but for all your
haste,

Your misses shake their heads, and find
you chaste.

I give my courage to those bold com-
manders,

That stay with us, and dare not go for
Flanders. 20

I leave my truth (to make his plot more
clear)

To Mr. Fuller, when he next shall swear.*
I give my judgment, craving all your
mercies,

To those that leave good plays, for damned
dull farces.

My small devotion let the gallants share,
That come to ogle us at evening prayer.

* William Fuller was an informer, who pre-
tended to have discovered a Jacobite plot in
1691. He swore falsely, and was put in the
pillory for his offence.

I give my person—let me well con-
sider,—

Faith, even to him that is the fairest
bidder;

To some rich hunks, if any be so bold

To say those dreadful words, *To have and*
hold. 30

But stay—to give, and be bequeathing
still,

When I'm so poor, is just like Wickham's
will:

Like that notorious cheat, vast sums I
give,

Only that you may keep me while I live.

Buy a good bargain, gallants, while you
may;

I'll cost you but your half a crown a day.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"LOVE TRIUMPHANT,

OR NATURE WILL PREVAIL."†

1693-1694.

PROLOGUE.

As, when some Treasurer lays down the
stick,

Warrants are signed for ready money
thick

And many desperate debentures paid,
Which never had been, had his lordship
stayed:

So now, this poet, who forsakes the stage,
Intends to gratify the present age.

One warrant shall be signed for every
man;

All shall be wits that will, and beaux that
can:

Provided still, this warrant be not shown,
And you be wits but to yourselves
alone; 10

† This play was Dryden's last, and it was a
failure.

Provided too, you rail at one another,
For there's no one wit, will allow a brother ;
Provided also, that you spare this story,
Damn all the plays that e'er shall come
before ye.

If one by chance prove good in half a
score,
Let that one pay for all, and damn it
more.

For if a good one 'scape among the crew,
And you continue judging as you do,
Every bad play will hope for damning too.
You might damn this, if it were worth your
pains ;

Here's nothing you will like ; no fustian
scenes,

And nothing too of—you know what he
means.

No *double entendres*, which you sparks
allow,

To make the ladies look they know not
how ;

Simply as 'twere, and knowing both
together,

Seeming to fan their faces in cold weather.
But here's a story, which no books relate,
Coined from our own old poet's addle-pate.

The fable has a moral too, if sought ;

But let that go ; for, upon second thought,
He fears but few come hither to be taught.
Yet if you will be profited, you may ;
And he would bribe you too to like his
play.

He dies, at least to us, and to the stage,
And what he has he leaves this noble age.
He leaves you, first, all plays of his inditing,
The whole estate which he has got by
writing.

The beaux may think this nothing but vain
praise ;

They'll find it something, the testator says ;
For half their love is made from scraps of
plays.

To his worst foes, he leaves his honesty,
That they may thrive upon't as much as he.
He leaves his manners to the roaring boys,
Who come in drunk and fill the house with
noise.

He leaves to the dire critics of his wit
His silence and contempt of all they write.
To Shakspeare's critic he bequeaths the
curse

To find his faults, and yet himself make
worse ;

A precious reader in poetic schools,
Who by his own examples damns his
rules.

Last, for the fair, he wishes you may be
From your dull critics, the lampooners, free.
Though he pretends no legacy to leave you,
An old man may at least good wishes give
you.

Your beauty names the play ; and may it
prove

To each an omen of Triumphant Love !

EPILOGUE.

Now, in good manners, nothing shall be
said

Against this play, because the poet's dead,
The Prologue told us of a moral here :
Would I could find it ! but the devil knows
where.

If in my part it lies, I fear he means
To warn us of the sparks behind our scenes.
For, if you'll take it on Dalinda's word,
'Tis a hard chapter to refuse a lord.

The poet might pretend this moral too,
That when a wit and fool together woo,
The damsel (not to break an ancient rule)
Should leave the wit, and take the wealthy
fool.

This he might mean ; but there's a truth
behind,

And, since it touches none of all our kind
But masks and misses, faith, I'll speak my
mind.

What if he taught our sex more cautious
carriage,

And not to be too coming before marriage ;
For fear of my misfortune in the play,
A kid brought home upon the wedding-
day ?

I fear there are few Sanchos in the pit
So good as to forgive and to forget,

That will, like him, restore us into favour,
And take us after on our good behaviour.
Few, when they find the money-bag is rent,
Will take it for good payment on content;
But in the telling, there the difference is,
Sometimes they find it more than they
could wish.

Therefore be warned, you misses and you
masks,

Look to your hits, nor give the first that
asks.

Tears, sighs, and oaths, no truth of passion
prove; 30

True settlement, alone, declares true love.

For him that weds a puss, who kept her
first,

I say but little, but I doubt the worst.

The wife, that was a cat, may mind her
house,

And prove an honest and a careful spouse;
But, faith, I would not trust her with a
mouse.

PROLOGUE SPOKEN THE
FIRST DAY OF THE KING'S
HOUSE ACTING

AFTER THE FIRE.

1672-1672.

So shipwrecked passengers escape to land,
So look they, when on the bare beach they
stand

Dropping and cold, and their first fear
scarce o'er,

Expecting famine on a desert shore.

From that hard climate we must wait for
bread,

Whence e'en the natives, forced by hunger,
fled.

Our stage does human chance present to
view,

But ne'er before was seen so sadly true:

You are changed too, and your pretence to
see

Is but a nobler name for charity. 10

Your own provisions furnish out our feasts,
While you the founders make yourselves
the guests.

Of all mankind beside Fate had some care,
But for poor Wit no portion did prepare,
'Tis left a rent-charge to the brave and
fair.

You cherished it, and now its fall you
mourn,

Which blind unmannered zealots make their
scorn,

Who think that fire a judgment on the
stage,

Which spared not temples in its furious
rage.

But as our new-built city rises higher, 20
So from old theatres may new aspire,

Since Fate contrives magnificence by fire.

Our great metropolis does far surpass

Whate'er is now, and equals all that was;

Our wit as far does foreign wit excel,

And, like a king, should in a palace dwell.

But we with golden hopes are vainly fed;

Talk high, and entertain you in a shed;

Your presence here, for which we humbly
sue,

Will grace old theatres, and build up
new.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO
THE KING AND QUEEN,

UPON THE UNION OF THE TWO COMPANIES
IN 1682—PUBLISHED 1683.

SINCE faction ebbs, and rogues grow out of
fashion,

Their penny scribes take care to inform the
nation,

How well men thrive in this or that plan-
tation:

How Pennsylvania's air agrees with Quakers,
And Carolina's with Associators:

Both e'en too good for madmen and for
traitors.

Truth is, our land with saints is so run o'er,
And every age produces such a store,
That now there's need of two New-Englands
more.

What's this, you'll say, to us and our
vocation? 10
Only thus much, that we have left our
station,
And made this theatre our new plantation.

The factious natives never could agree;
But aiming, as they called it, to be free,
Those play-house Whigs set up for property.

Some say, they no obedience paid of late;
But would new fears and jealousies create;
Till topsy-turvy they had turned the state.

Plain sense, without the talent of foretelling,
Might guess 'twould end in downright
knocks and quelling: 20
For seldom comes there better of rebelling.

When men will, needlessly, their freedom
barter
For lawless power, sometimes they catch a
Tartar;
There's a damned word that rhymes to this,
called Charter.

But, since the victory with us remains,
You shall be called to twelve in all our
gains;
If you'll not think us saucy for our pains.

Old men shall have good old plays to
delight 'em;
And you, fair ladies and gallants, that
slight 'em,
We'll treat with good new plays; if our
new wits can write 'em. 30

We'll take no blundering verse, no fustian
tumour,
No dribbling love, from this or that per-
fumer;
No dull fat fool shammed on the stage for
humour.

For, faith, some of 'em such vile stuff have
made,
As none but fools or fairies ever played;
But 'twas, as shopmen say, to force a trade.

We've given you tragedies, all sense
defying,
And singing men, in woful metre dying;
This 'tis when heavy lubbers will be flying.

All these disasters we will hope to
weather; 40
We bring you none of our old lumber
hither:
Whig poets and Whig sheriffs * may hang
together.

EPILOGUE.

New ministers, when first they get in place,
Must have a care to please; and that's our
case:

Some laws for public welfare we design,
If you, the power supreme, will please to
join.

There are a sort of prattlers in the pit,
Who either have, or who pretend to wit;
These noisy sirs so loud their parts rehearse,
That oft the play is silenced by the farce.
Let such be dumb, this penalty to shun,
Each to be thought my lady's eldest
son. 10

But stay; methinks some vizard-mask
I see

Cast out her lure from the mid gallery:
About her all the fluttering sparks are
ranged;

The noise continues, though the scene is
changed:

Now growling, sputtering, wailing, such a
clutter!

'Tis just like puss defendant in a gutter:
Fine love, no doubt: but ere two days are
o'er ye,

The surgeon will be told a woful story.

* Scott supposed that Dryden alluded to Henry Cornish, sheriff, who was hanged in 1686, but the date shows that this was an error.

Let vizard-mask her naked face expose,
On pain of being thought to want a
nose : 20

Then for your lacqueys, and your train
beside,

(By whate'er name or title dignified,)

They roar so loud, you'd think behind the
stairs

Tom Dove, and all the brotherhood of bears :
They're grown a nuisance, beyond all dis-
asters ;

We've none so great but their unpaying
masters.

We beg you, sirs, to beg your men that
they

Would please to give you leave to hear the
play.

Next, in the play-house, spare your precious
lives ;

Think, like good Christians, on your bearns
and wives ; 30

Think on your souls ; but by your lugging
forth,

It seems you know how little they are worth.
If none of these will move the warlike mind,
Think on the helpless whore you leave
behind.

We beg you, last, our scene-room to forbear,
And leave our goods and chattels to our
care.

Alas ! our women are but washy toys,
And wholly taken up in stage employs :
Poor willing tits they are : but yet, I doubt,
This double duty soon will wear them
out. 40

Then you are watched beside with jealous
care :

What if my lady's page should find you
there ?

My lady knows to a tittle what there's in ye ;
No passing your gilt shilling for a guinea.
Thus, gentlemen, we have summed up in
short

Our grievances, from country, town, and
court ;

Which humbly we submit to your good
pleasure ;

But first vote money, then redress at leisure.

PROLOGUE TO

"CIRCE."

[BY DR. DAVENANT, 1675.]

WERE you but half so wise as you're
severe,

Our youthful poet should not need to fear :
To his green years your censures you would
suit,

Not blast the blossom, but expect the fruit.
The sex, that best does pleasure under-
stand,

Will always choose to err on t' other hand.
They check him not that's awkward in
delight,

But clap the young rogue's cheek, and set
him right.

Thus heartened well, and fleshed upon his
prey,

The youth may prove a man another
day. 10

Your Ben and Fletcher, in their first young
flight,

Did no Volpone, nor no Arbaces write ;
But hopped about, and short excursions
made

From bough to bough, as if they were
afraid,

And each was guilty of some Slighted
Maid.

Shakspeare's own Muse her Pericles first
bore ;

The Prince of Tyre was elder than the
Moor ;

'Tis miracle to see a first good play ;
All hawthorns do not bloom on Christmas-
day.

A slender poet must have time to grow, 20
And spread and burnish as his brothers do.
Who still looks lean, sure with some pox
is cursed ;

But no man can be Falstaff-fat at first.
Then damn not, but indulge his rude
essays,

Encourage him, and bloat him up with
praise,

That he may get more bulk before he dies :
 He's not yet fed enough for sacrifice.
 Perhaps, if now your grace you will not
 grudge,
 He may grow up to write, and you to
 judge.

— — —
 EPILOGUE INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN
 SPOKEN BY THE

LADY HENRIETTA MARIA
 WENTWORTH *

WHEN "CALISTO" WAS ACTED AT COURT.

1675-1684.

As Jupiter I made my court in vain ;
 I'll now assume my native shape again.
 I'm weary to be so unkindly used,
 And would not be a god, to be refused.
 State grows uneasy when it hinders love ;
 A glorious burden, which the wise remove.
 Now, as a nymph, I need not sue, nor try,
 The force of any lightning but the eye.
 Beauty and youth more than a god com-
 mand ;
 No Jove could e'er the force of these with-
 stand. 10
 'Tis here that sovereign power admits
 dispute ;
 Beauty sometimes is justly absolute.
 Our sullen Catos, whatsoe'er they say,
 Even while they frown, and dictate laws,
 obey.
 You, mighty sir, our bonds more easy make,
 And gracefully, what all must suffer, take ;
 Above those forms the grave affect to wear ;
 For 'tis not to be wise to be severe.
 True wisdom may some gallantry admit, 20
 And soften business with the charms of wit.
 These peaceful triumphs with your cares
 you bought,
 And from the midst of fighting nations
 brought.

* This beautiful but unhappy young lady be-
 came afterwards the mistress of the Duke of Mon-
 mouth, who danced in the same masque.

You only hear it thunder from afar,
 And sit in peace the arbiter of war :
 Peace, the loathed manna, which hot brains
 despise,
 You knew its worth, and made it early
 prize ;
 And in its happy leisure sit and see
 The promises of more felicity ;
 Two glorious nymphs of your own godlike
 line,†
 Whose morning rays like noontide strike
 and shine : 30
 Whom you to suppliant monarchs shall
 dispose,
 To bind your friends, and to disarm your
 foes.

— — —
 EPILOGUE TO
 "THE MAN OF MODE,
 OR SIR FOPLING FLUTTER." ‡

1676.

MOST modern wits such monstrous fools
 have shown,
 They seem not of Heaven's making, but
 their own.
 Those nauseous Harlequins in farce may
 pass ;
 But there goes more to a substantial ass :
 Something of man must be exposed to view,
 That, gallants, they may more resemble
 you.
 Sir Fopling is a fool so nicely writ,
 The ladies would mistake him for a wit ;
 And, when he sings, talks loud, and cocks,
 would cry,
 I vow, methinks, he's pretty company ! 10
 So brisk, so gay, so travelled, so refined,
 As he took pains to graff upon his kind.
 True fops help Nature's work, and go to
 school,
 To file and finish God Almighty's fool.

† The princesses Mary and Anne, who acted
 in "Calisto."

‡ Written by Sir George Ethieridge.

Yet none Sir Fopling him or him can call ;
He's knight of the shire, and represents
ye all.

From each he meets he culls whate'er he
can ;

Legion's his name, a people in a man.

His bulky folly gathers as it goes,
And, rolling o'er you, like a snowball
grows. 20

His various modes from various fathers
follow ;

One taught the toss, and one the new
French wallow ;

His sword-knot this, his cravat that de-
signed ;

And this the yard-long snake he twirls
behind.

From one the sacred periwig he gained,
Which wind ne'er blew, nor touch of hat
profaned.

Another's diving bow he did adore,
Which with a shog casts all the hair before,
Till he with full decorum brings it back,
And rises with a water-spaniel shake. 30
As for his songs, the ladies' dear delight,
These sure he took from most of you who
write.

Yet every man is safe from what he feared.
For no one fool is hunted from the herd.

EPILOGUE TO

"MITHRIDATES, KING OF PONTUS."

[BY MR. N. LEE, 1678.]

You've seen a pair of faithful lovers die :
And much you care ; for most of you will
cry,

'Twas a just judgment on their constancy.
For, Heaven be thanked, we live in such
an age,

When no man dies for love, but on the stage :
And e'en those martyrs are but rare in
plays ;

A curs'd sign how much true faith decays.

Love is no more a violent desire ;
'Tis a mere metaphor, a painted fire.

In all our sex, the name examined well, 10
'Tis pride to gain, and vanity to tell.

In woman, 'tis of subtle interest made :
Curse on the punk that made it first a trade !
She first did wit's prerogative remove,
And made a fool presume to prate of love.

Let honour and preferment go for gold ;
But glorious beauty is not to be sold :
Or, if it be, 'tis at a rate so high,

That nothing but adoring it should buy.
Yet the rich cullies may their boasting
spare ; 20

They purchase but sophisticated ware.
'Tis prodigality that buys deceit,

Where both the giver and the taker cheat.
Men but refine on the old half-crown way ;
And women fight, like Swissers, for their
pay.

PROLOGUE TO

"THE TRUE WIDOW." *

1678.

HEAVEN save ye, gallants, and this hopeful
age !

Ye are welcome to the downfall of the stage.
The fools have laboured long in their voca-
tion ;

And vice (the manufacture of the nation)
O'erstocks the town so much, and thrives
so well,

That fops and knaves grow drugs, and will
not sell.

In vain our wares on theatres are shown,
When each has a plantation of his own.

His cruse ne'er fails ; for whatso'er he
spends,

There's still God's plenty for himself and
friends. 10

Should men be rated by poetic rules,
Lord, what a poll would there be raised
from fools !

* Written by Shadwell.

Meantime poor wit prohibited must lie,
As if 'twere made some French commodity:
Fools you will have, and raised at vast
expense ;

And yet, as soon as seen, they give offence.
Time was, when none would cry "That oaf
was me !"

But now you strive about your pedigree.
Bauble and cap no sooner are thrown down,
But there's a muss * of more than half the
town. 20

Each one will challenge a child's part at
least ;

A sign the family is well increast.
Of foreign cattle there's no longer need,
When we're supplied so fast with English
breed.

Well ! flourish, countrymen ; drink, swear,
and roar ;

Let every free-born subject keep his whore,
And wandering in the wilderness about,
At end of forty years not wear her out.
But when you see these pictures, let none
dare

To own beyond a limb, or single share ; 30
For where the punk is common, he's a sot
Who needs will father what the parish got.

PROLOGUE TO

"CÆSAR BORGIA."

[BY MR. N. LEE, 1680.]—1680.

THE unhappy man, who once has trailed a
pen,

Lives not to please himself, but other men ;
Is always drudging, wastes his life and
blood,

Yet only eats and drinks what you think
good.

What praise soe'er the poetry deserve,
Yet every fool can bid the poet starve.

* A muss is a crowd.

That fumbling lecher to revenge is bent,
Because he thinks himself or whore is
meant :

Name but a cuckold, all the city swarms ;
From Leadenhall to Ludgate is in arms : 10
Were there no fear of Antichrist, or France,
In the best time poor poets live by chance.
Either you come not here, or, as you
grace

Some old acquaintance, drop into the
place,
Careless and qualmish with a yawning
face :

You sleep o'er wit, and by my troth you
may ;

Most of your talents lie another way.
You love to hear of some prodigious tale,
The bell that tolled alone, or Irish whale.
News is your food, and you enough pro-
vide, 20

Both for yourselves, and all the world be-
side.

One theatre there is of vast resort,
Which whilome of Requests was called the
Court ;

But now the great Exchange of News 'tis
hight,
And full of hum and buzz from noon till
night.

Up stairs and down you run, as for a race,
And each man wears three nations in his
face.

So big you look, though claret you re-
trench,

That, armed with bottled ale, you huff the
French.

But all your entertainment still is fed 30
By villains in your own dull island bred.

Would you return to us, we dare engage
To show you better rogues upon the stage.
You know no poison but plain ratsbane
here ;

Death's more refined, and better bred else-
where.

They have a civil way in Italy,
By smelling a perfume to make you die ;
A trick would make you lay your snuff-
box by.

Murder's a trade, so known and practised
there,
That 'tis infallible as is the Chair. 40
But, mark their feast, you shall behold such
pranks;
The Pope says grace, but 'tis the devil
gives thanks.

PROLOGUE TO

"SOPHONISBA."

AT OXFORD, 1680.

THESPIS, the first professor of our art,
At country wakes, sung ballads from a cart.
To prove this true, if Latin be no trespass,
Dicitur et plaustris vexisse Poemata
Thespis.
But Æschylus, says Horace in some page,
Was the first mountebank that trod the
stage:
Yet Athens never knew your learned sport
Of tossing poets in a tennis-court.
But 'tis the talent of our English nation
Still to be plotting some new reformation: 10
And few years hence, if anarchy goes on,
Jack Presbyter shall here erect his throne,
Knock out a tub with preaching once a
day,
And every prayer be longer than a play.
Then all your heathen wits shall go to pot,
For disbelieving of a Popish-plot:
Your poets shall be used like infidels,
And worst, the author of the Oxford Bells:
Nor should we 'scape the sentence, to
depart,
E'en in our first original, a cart. 20
No zealous brother there would want a
stone,
To maul us cardinals, and pelt Pope Joan:
Religion, learning, wit, would be sup-
pressed,
Rags of the whore, and trappings of the
beast:

Scot, Suarez, Tom of Aquin, must go down,
As chief supporters of the triple crown;
And Aristotle's for destruction ripe;
Some say, he called the soul an organ-pipe,
Which, by some little help of derivation,
Shall then be proved a pipe of inspiration. 30

A PROLOGUE.

1680-1681.

If yet there be a few that take delight
In that which reasonable men should write;
To them alone we dedicate this night.
The rest may satisfy their curious itch,
With city-gazettes, or some factious speech,
Or whate'er libel, for the public good,
Stirs up the shrove-tide crew to fire and
blood.
Remove your benches, you apostate pit,
And take, above, twelve pennyworth of
wit;
Go back to your dear dancing on the
rope, 10
Or see what's worse, the devil and the
Pope.
The plays that take on our corrupted stage,
Methinks, resemble the distracted age;
Noise, madness, all unreasonable things,
That strike at sense, as rebels do at kings.
The style of forty-one our poets write,
And you are grown to judge like forty-
eight.
Such censures our mistaking audience
make,
That 'tis almost grown scandalous to take.
They talk of fevers that infect the brains; 20
But nonsense is the new disease that reigns.
Weak stomachs, with a long disease op-
pressed,
Cannot the cordials of strong wit digest.
'Therefore thin nourishment of farce ye
choose,
Decoctions of a barley-water Muse:
A meal of tragedy would make ye sick,
Unless it were a very tender chick.

Some scenes in sippets would be worth our time;
 Those would go down; some love that's poached in rhyme;
 If these should fail—— 30
 We must lie down, and after all our cost,
 Keep holiday, like watermen in frost;
 While you turn players on the world's great stage,
 And act yourselves the farce of your own age.

PROLOGUE TO THE
 UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

1681.

THE famed Italian Muse,* whose rhymes advance
 Orlando and the Paladins of France,
 Records, that, when our wit and sense is flown,
 'Tis lodged within the circle of the moon,
 In earthen jars, which one, who thither soared,
 Set to his nose, snuffed up, and was restored.
 Whate'er the story be, the moral 's true;
 The wit we lost in town, we find in you.
 Our poets their fied parts may draw from hence,
 And fill their windy heads with sober sense. 10
 When London votes with Southwark's disagree,
 Here may they find their long-lost loyalty.
 Here busy senates, to th' old cause inclined,
 May snuff the votes their fellows left behind:
 Your country neighbours, when their grain grows dear,
 May come, and find their last provision here:

* Ariosto.

Whereas we cannot much lament our loss,
 Who neither carried back, nor brought one cross.
 We looked what representatives would bring;
 But they helped us, just as they did the king, 20
 Yet we despair not; for we now lay forth
 The Sibyl's books to those who know their worth;
 And though the first was sacrificed before,
 These volumes doubly will the price restore.
 Our poet bade us hope this grace to find,
 To whom by long prescription you are kind.
 He, whose undaunted Muse, with loyal rage,
 Has never spared the vices of the age,
 Here finding nothing that his spleen can raise,
 Is forced to turn his satire into praise. 30

PROLOGUE TO
 HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS,

UPON HIS FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE DUKE'S
 THEATRE, AFTER HIS RETURN FROM SCOT-
 LAND, 1682.

In those cold regions which no summers cheer,
 Where brooding darkness covers half the year,
 To hollow caves the shivering natives go;
 Bears range abroad, and hunt in tracks of snow:
 But when the tedious twilight wears away,
 And stars grow paler at the approach of day,
 The longing crowds to frozen mountains run;
 Happy who first can see the glimmering sun:

The surly savage offspring disappear,
 And curse the bright successor of the
 year. 10
 Yet, though rough bears in covert seek
 defence,
 White foxes stay, with seeming innocence :
 That crafty kind with daylight can dis-
 pense.
 Still we are thronged so full with Reynard's
 race,
 That loyal subjects scarce can find a place :
 Thus modest truth is cast behind the
 crowd :
 Truth speaks too low ; Hypocrisy too
 loud.
 Let them be first to flatter in success ;
 Duty can stay, but guilt has need to
 press.
 Once, when true zeal the sons of God did
 call, 20
 To make their solemn show at Heaven's
 Whitehall,
 The fawning devil appeared among the
 rest,
 And made as good a courtier as the best.
 The friends of Job, who railed at him
 before,
 Came cap in hand when he had three
 times more.
 Yet late repentance may, perhaps, be
 true ;
 Kings can forgive, if rebels can but sue :
 A tyrant's power in rigour is expressed ;
 The father yearns in the true prince's
 breast.
 We grant, an o'ergrown Whig no grace
 can mend ; 30
 But most are babes, that know not they
 offend.
 The crowd to restless motion still inclined,
 Are clouds, that tack according to the
 wind,
 Driven by their chiefs they storms of hail-
 stones pour ;
 Then mourn, and soften to a silent shower.
 Oh, welcome to this much-offending land,
 The prince that brings forgiveness in his
 hand !

Thus angels on glad messages appear :
 Their first salute commands us not to
 fear :
 Thus Heaven, that could constrain us to
 obey, 40
 (With reverence if we might presume to
 say)
 Seems to relax the rights of sovereign
 sway :
 Permits to man the choice of good and ill,
 And makes us happy by our own free-will.

PROLOGUE TO

"THE EARL OF ESSEX."

[BY MR J. BANKS, 1682.]

*Spoken to the KING and the QUEEN at
 their coming to the House.*

WHEN first the ark was landed on the
 shore,
 And Heaven had vowed to curse the
 ground no more :
 When tops of hills the longing patriarch
 saw,
 And the new scene of earth began to draw ;
 The dove was sent to view the waves'
 decrease,
 And first brought back to man the pledge
 of peace.
 'Tis needless to apply, when those appear,
 Who bring the olive, and who plant it
 here.
 We have before our eyes the royal dove,
 Still innocent, as harbinger of love : 10
 The ark is opened to dismiss the train,
 And people with a better race the plain.
 Tell me, ye Powers, why should vain man
 pursue,
 With endless toil, each object that is new,
 And for the seeming substance leave the
 true ?
 Why should he quit for hopes his certain
 good,
 And loathe the manna of his daily food ?

Must England still the scene of changes be,
Tossed and tempestuous, like our ambient
sea? 20

Must still our weather and our wills agree?
Without our blood our liberties we have:
Who that is free would fight to be a
slave?

Or, what can wars to after-times assure,
Of which our present age is not secure?
All that our monarch would for us ordain,
Is but to enjoy the blessings of his reign.
Our land's an Eden, and the main's our
fence,

While we preserve our state of innocence:
That lost, then beasts their brutal force
employ,

And first their lord, and then themselves
destroy. 30

What civil broils have cost, we know too
well;

Oh, let it be enough that once we fell!
And every heart conspire, and every tongue,
Still to have such a king, and this king
long.

AN EPILOGUE FOR

THE KING'S HOUSE.

WE act by fits and starts, like drowning
men,

But just peep up, and then pop down again.
Let those who call us wicked change their
sense;

For never men lived more on Providence.
Not lottery cavaliers* are half so poor,
Nor broken cits, nor a vacation whore.
Not courts, nor courtiers living on the
rents

Of the three last un giving parliaments:
So wretched, that, if Pharaoh could divine,
He might have spared his dream of seven
lean kine, 10

And changed his vision for the Muses nine.

The comet, that, they say, portends a
dearth,

Was but a vapour drawn from play-house
earth:

Pent there since our last fire, and, Lilly says,
Foreshows our change of state, and thin
third-days.

'Tis not our want of wit that keeps us poor;
For then the printer's press would suffer
more.

Their pamphleteers each day their venom
spit;

They thrive by treason, and we starve by
wit.

Confess the truth, which of you has not
laid 20

Four farthings out to buy the Hatfield
Maid?†

Or, which is duller yet, and more would
spite us,

Democritus his wars with Heraclitus?
Such are the authors, who have run us
down,

And exercised you critics of the town.
Yet these are pearls to your lampooning
rhymes,

Y' abuse yourselves more dully than the
times.

Scandal, the glory of the English nation,
Is worn to rags, and scribbled out of
fashion.

Such harmless thrusts, as if, like fencers
wise, 30

They had agreed their play before their
prize.

Faith, they may hang their harps upon the
willows;

'Tis just like children when they box with
pillows.

Then put an end to civil wars for shame;
Let each knight-errant, who has wronged
a dame,

Throw down his pen, and give her, as he
can,

The satisfaction of a gentleman.

* The cavaliers who had lost everything in
the Civil War were allowed to hold lotteries.

† Elizabeth Freeman, who pretended to have
had a vision. It was a device in the interests of
Monmouth.

PROLOGUE TO
 "THE LOYAL BROTHER,
 OR THE PERSIAN PRINCE."

[BY MR. SOUTHERNE, 1682.]

POETS, like lawful monarchs, ruled the stage,
 Till critics, like damned Whigs, debauched our age.
 Mark how they jump: critics would regulate
 Our theatres, and Whigs reform our state:
 Both pretend love, and both (plague rot them!) hate.
 The critic humbly seems advice to bring;
 The fawning Whig petitions to the King:
 But one's advice into a satire slides;
 T' other's petition a remonstrance hides.
 These will no taxes give, and those no pence;
 Critics would starve the poet, Whigs the prince.
 The critic all our troops of friends discards;
 Just so the Whig would fain pull down the guards.
 Guards are illegal, that drive foes away,
 As watchful shepherds, that fright beasts of prey.
 Kings, who disband such needless aids as these,
 Are safe—as long as e'er their subjects please:
 And that would be till next Queen Bess's night:
 Which thus grave penny chroniclers indite.

* At the King's Head tavern, the corner of Chancery Lane, and opposite the Inner-Temple Gate, the principal opponents to the court-measures and the chiefs of the Whig party assembled, under the name of the King's Head Club, and afterwards the Green Ribbon Club, from ribbons of that colour which they wore in their hats. Here they subscribed a guinea apiece for a bonfire, in which the effigies of the Pope were to be burnt on the 17th of November

Sir Edmondbury first, in woful wise, 30
 Leads up the show, and milks their maudlin eyes.
 There's not a butcher's wife but dribs her part,
 And pities the poor pageant from her heart;
 Who, to provoke revenge, rides round the fire,
 And, with a civil congé, does retire:
 But guiltless blood to ground must never fall;
 There's Antichrist behind, to pay for all.
 The punk of Babylon in pomp appears,
 A lewd old gentleman of seventy years:
 Whose age in vain our mercy would implore;
 For few take pity on an old cast whore.
 The devil, who brought him to the shame, takes part;
 Sits cheek by jowl, in black, to cheer his heart;
 Like thief and parson in a Tyburn-cart.
 The word is given, and with a loud huzza
 The mitred poppet from his chair they draw.
 On the slain corpse contending nations fall:
 Alas! what's one poor pope among them all!

(being the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession), with more than ordinary pomp; for it was heretofore an annual ceremony, usually made without any remarkable parade. The procession now consisted of one representing the dead body of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, carried on a horse, with a person preceding it ringing a bell, to remind people of his murder: then followed a mob of fellows, dressed like Carmelites, Jesuits, bishops, cardinals, &c., and several boys with incense-pots, surrounding an image of the Pope, with that of the devil just behind him,

Like thief and parson in a Tyburn cart.

In this manner they marched from Bishopsgate to the corner of Chancery Lane, where they committed the inoffensive effigies to the flames; while the balconies and windows of the King's Head were filled with people of consequence, who countenanced the tumult; which, the Hon. Roger North says, struck a terror upon people's spirits.—DERRICK.

He burns; now all true hearts your triumphs ring:

And next, for fashion, cry, God save the king! 40

A needful cry in 'midst of such alarms,
When forty thousand men are up in arms.
But after he's once saved, to make amends,
In each succeeding health they damn his friends:

So God begins, but still the devil ends.

What if some one, inspired with zeal,
should call,

Come, let's go cry, God save him! at Whitehall?

His best friends would not like this over-care,

Or think him e'er the safer for this prayer.

Five praying saints are by an act allowed; 50

But not the whole church-militant in crowd.

Yet, should Heaven all the true petitions drain

Of Presbyterians who would kings maintain,

Of forty thousand, five would scarce remain.

EPILOGUE TO

TAMERLANE.*

1687.

LADIES, the beardless author of this day
Commends to you the fortune of his play,
A woman's wit has often graced the stage,
But he's the first boy-poet of our age.
Early as is the year, his fancies blow
Like young Narcissus peeping through the snow.

Thus Cowley† blossomed soon, yet flourished long;

This is as forward, and may prove as strong.

* Written by Charles Southern.

† Cowley when fifteen published his "Poetical Blossoms."

Youth with the fair should always favour find,

Or we are damned dissemblers of our kind. 10

What's all this love they put into our parts?
'Tis but the pit-a-pat of two young hearts.

Should hag and grey-beard make such tender moan,

Faith, you'd e'en trust them to themselves alone,

And cry, "Let's go, here's nothing to be done."

Since love's our business, as 'tis your delight,
The young, who best can practice, best can write.

What though he be not come to his full power?

He's mending and improving every hour.

You sly she-jockies of the box and pit, 20
Are pleased to find a hot unbroken wit:

By management he may in time be made,

But there's no hope of an old battered jade;

Faint and unnerved, he runs into a sweat,

And always fails you at the second hent.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

PROLOGUE.

*Spoken by MR. HART, at the acting of .
"The Silent Woman."*

WHAT Greece, when learning flourished,
only knew,

Athenian judges, you this day renew.

Here too are annual rites to Pallas done,

And here poetic prizes lost or won.

Methinks I see you, crowned with olives,
sit,

And strike a sacred horror from the pit.

A day of doom is this of your decree,

Where even the best are but by mercy free:

A day, which none but Jonson durst have
wished to see.

Here they, who long have known the useful
stage, 10

Come to be taught themselves to teach the
age.

As your commissioners our poets go,
To cultivate the virtue which you sow ;
In your Lycæum first themselves refined,
And delegated thence to humankind.

But as ambassadors, when long from
home,

For new instructions to their princes come ;
So poets, who your precepts have forgot,
Return, and beg they may be better taught :
Follies and faults elsewhere by them are
shown, 20

But by your manners they correct their
own.

The illiterate writer, empiric-like, applies
To minds diseased, unsafe, chance reme-
dies :

The learned in schools, where knowledge
first began,

Studies with care the anatomy of man ;
Sees virtue, vice, and passions in their
cause,

And fame from science, not from fortune,
draws.

So Poetry, which is in Oxford made
An art, in London only is a trade.

There haughty dunces, whose unlearned
pen 30

Could ne'er spell grammar, would be read-
ing men.

Such build their poems the Lucretian
way ;

So many huddled atoms make a play ;
And if they hit in order by some chance,
They call that nature, which is ignorance.
To such a fame let mere town-wits aspire,
And their gay nonsense their own cits ad-
mire.

Our poet, could he find forgiveness here,
Would wish it rather than a plaudit there.

He owns no crown from those Prætorian
bands, 40

But knows that right is in the senate's
hands,

Not impudent enough to hope your praise,

Low at the Muses' feet his wreath he lays,
And, where he took it up, resigns his
bays.

Kings make their poets whom themselves
think fit,

But 'tis your suffrage makes authentic wit.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by the same.

No poor Dutch peasant, winged with all
his fear,

Flies with more haste, when the French
arms draw near,

Than we with our poetic train come down,
For refuge hither, from the infected town :
Heaven for our sins this summer has thought
fit

To visit us with all the plagues of wit.
A French troop first swept all things in its
way ;

But those hot Monsieurs were too quick to
stay :

Yet, to our cost, in that short time, we
find

They left their itch of novelty behind. 10

The Italian merry-andrews took their place,
And quite debauched the stage with lewd
grimace :

Instead of wit, and humours, your delight
Was there to see two hobby-horses fight :

Stout Scaramoucha with rush lance rode in,
And ran a tilt at centaur Arlequin.

For love you heard how amorous asses
brayed,

And cats in gutters gave their serenade.
Nature was out of countenance, and each
day

Some new-born monster shown you for a
play. 20

But when all failed, to strike the stage quite
dumb,

Those wicked engines called machines are
come.

Thunder and lightning now for wit are
played,

And shortly scenes in Lapland will be laid :

Art magic is for poetry professed ;
And cats and dogs, and each obscene
beast,

To which Ægyptian dotards once did bow,
Upon our English stage are worshipped
now.

Witchcraft reigns there, and raises to
renown

Macbeth and Simon Magus of the town ; so
Fletcher's despised, your Jonson's out of
fashion,

And wit the only drug in all the nation.
In this low ebb our wares to you are
shown ;

By you those staple authors' worth is
known :

For wit's a manufacture of your own.

When you, who only can, their scenes have
praised,

We'll boldly back, and say, their price is
raised.

PROLOGUE TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

DISCORD and plots, which have undone
our age,

With the same ruin have o'erwhelmed the
stage.

Our house has suffered in the common woe,
We have been troubled with Scotch rebels
too.

Our brethren are from Thames to Tweed
departed,

And of our sisters, all the kinder-hearted,
To Edinburgh* gone, or coached, or carted.
With bonny bluecap there they act all night
For Scotch half-crown, in English three-
pence hight.

One nymph, to whom fat Sir John Falstaff's
lean, 10

There with her single person fills the scene.

Another, with long use and age decayed,
Dived here old woman, and rose there a
maid.

Our trusty doorkeepers of former time
There strut and swagger in heroic rhyme.

Tack but a copper-lace to drugget suit,
And there's a hero made without dispute :
And that, which was a capon's tail before,
Becomes a plume for Indian emperor.

But all his subjects, to express the care 20
Of imitation, go, like Indians, bare :
Laced linen there would be a dangerous
thing ;

It might perhaps a new rebellion bring ;
The Scot, who wore it, would be chosen
king.

But why should I these renegades describe
When you yourselves have seen a lewder
tribe ?

Teague has been here, and, to this learned
pit,

With Irish action slandered English wit :
You have beheld such barbarous Macs
appear, 30

As merited a second massacre :
Such as, like Cain, were branded with
disgrace,

And had their country stamped upon their
face.

When strollers durst presume to pick your
purse,

We humbly thought our broken troop not
worse.

How ill soe'er our action may deserve,
Oxford's a place where wit can never
starve.

PROLOGUE TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

THOUGH actors cannot much of learning
boast,

Of all who want it, we admire it most :

We love the praises of a learned pit,
As we remotely are allied to wit.

* The actors had followed the Duke of York
to Edinburgh.

We speak our poet's wit, and trade in ore,

Like those, who touch upon the golden shore :

Betwixt our judges can distinction make,
Discern how much, and why, our poems take :

Mark if the fools, or men of sense, rejoice ;
Whether the applause be only sound or voice. 10

When our fop gallants, or our city folly,
Clap over-loud, it makes us melancholy :
We doubt that scene which does their wonder raise,

And, for their ignorance, condemn their praise.

Judge then, if we who act, and they who write,

Should not be proud of giving you delight.
London likes grossly ; but this nicer pit
Examines, fathoms all the depths of wit ;
The ready finger lays on every blot ;
Knows what should justly please, and what should not, 20

Nature herself lies open to your view ;
You judge by her, what draught of her is true,

Where outlines false, and colours seem too faint,

Where bunglers daub, and where true poets paint,

But, by the sacred genius of this place,
By every Muse, by each domestic grace,
Be kind to wit, which but endeavours well,

And, where you judge, presumes not to excel.

Our poets hither for adoption come,
As nations sued to be made free of Rome : 30
Not in the suffragating tribes to stand,
But in your utmost, last, provincial band.
If his ambition may those hopes pursue,
Who with religion loves your arts and you,
Oxford to him a dearer name shall be,
Than his own mother university.

Thebes did his green unknowing, youth engage ;

He chooses Athens in his riper age

PROLOGUE TO

"DISAPPOINTMENT,

OR THE MOTHER IN FASHION." *

1684.

How comes it, gentlemen, that, nowa-days,

When all of you so shrewdly judge of plays,

Our poets tax you still with want of sense ?
All prologues treat you at your own expense.

Sharp citizens a wiser way can go ;
They make you fools, but never call you so.
They in good manners seldom make a slip,

But treat a common whore with—ladyship :
But here each saucy wit at random writes,
And uses ladies as he uses knights. 10
Our author, young and grateful in his nature,

Vows that from him no nymph deserves a satire ;

Nor will he ever draw—I mean his rhyme
Against the sweet partaker of his crime ;

Nor is he yet so bold an undertaker
To call men fools—'tis railing at their Maker.

Besides, he fears to split upon that shelf ;
He's young enough to be a fop himself :
And, if his praise can bring you all a-bed,
He swears such hopeful youth no nation ever bred. 20

Your nurses, we presume, in such a case,

Your father chose, because he liked the face,

And often they supplied your mother's place.

The dry nurse was your mother's ancient maid,

Who knew some former slip she ne'er betrayed.

* Written by Southern.

Between them both, for milk and sugar-candy,
Your sucking-bottles were well stored with brandy.

Your father, to initiate your discourse,
Meant to have taught you first to swear and curse,

But was prevented by each careful nurse. 30
For, leaving dad and mam, as names too common,

They taught you certain parts of man and woman.

I pass your schools; for there when first you came,

You would be sure to learn the Latin name.
In colleges, you scorned the art of thinking,
But learned all moods and figures of good drinking :

Thence come to town, you practice play, to know

The virtues of the high dice and the low.*
Each thinks himself a sharper most profound :

He cheats by pence, is cheated by the pound. 40

With these perfections, and what else he gleans,

The spark sets up for love behind our scenes,
Hot in pursuit of priaces and queens.

There, if they know their man, with cunning carriage,

Twenty to one but it concludes in marriage.
He hires some lonely room, love's fruits to gather,

And garret-high rebels against his father :
But he once dead——

Brings her in triumph, with her portion, down,

A toilet, dressing-box, and half a crown. 50
Some marry first, and then they fall to scowering,

Which is refining marriage into whoring.

Our women batten well on their good-nature;
All they can rap and rend for the dear creature.

But while abroad so liberal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.
Last, some there are, who take their first degrees

Of lewdness in our middle galleries;
The doughty bullies enter bloody drunk,
Invade and grabble one another's punk : 60
They caterwaul, and make a dismal rout,
Call sons of whores, and strike, but ne'er lug out :

Thus, while for paltry punk they roar and stickle,

They make it bawdier than a conventicle.

EPILOGUE TO

"CONSTANTINE THE GREAT."

[BY N. LEE, 1684.]

OUR hero's happy in the play's conclusion;
The holy rogue at last has met confusion :
Though Arius all along appeared a saint,
The last act showed him a true Protestant.
Eusebius,—for you know I read Greek authors,—

Reports that after all these plots and slaughters,

The Court of Constantine was full of glory,
And every Trimmer turned addressing Tory,
They followed him in herds, as they were mad ;

When Clause† was king, then all the world was glad. 10

Whigs kept the places they possessed before,
And most were in a way of getting more ;
Which was as much as saying, "Gentlemen,
Here's power and money to be rogues again."

Indeed, there were a set of peaking tools,
Some call them modest, but I call them fools ;

* Loaded dice, contrived some for high, and others for low throws.

† The King of the Beggars, in "Beggars' Bush."

Men much more loyal, though not half so
loud,
But these poor devils were cast behind the
crowd.
For bold knaves thrive without one grain
of sense,
But good men starve for want of impu-
dence. 20

Besides all these, there were a sort of
wights;

(I think my author calls them Tekelites,)
Such heady rogues against the king and
laws,

They favoured e'en a foreign rebel's cause,
When their own damned design was
quashed and awed;

At least they gave it their good word
abroad,

As many a man, who, for a quiet life,
Breeds out his bastard; not to noise his
wife,

Thus, in their darling plot, these Trimmers
cry,

And though they cannot keep it in their
eye, 30

They bind it 'prentice to Count Tekely.*

They believe not the last plot: may I be
curst,

If I believe they e'er believed the first!

No wonder their own plot no plot they
think,

The man that makes it never smells the
stink.

And now it comes into my head, I'll tell
Why these damned Trimmers loved the
Turks so well.

The original Trimmer,† though a friend to
no man,

Yet in his heart adored a pretty woman;
He knew that Mahomet laid up for ever, 40
Kind black-eyed rogues for every true be-
liever;

And—which was more than mortal man
e'er tasted—

One pleasure that for threescore twelve-
months lasted.

To turn for this may surely be forgiven;
Who'd not be circumcised for such a
heaven?

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"THE PRINCESS OF CLEVES."

[BY N. LEE.] 1681—PUBLISHED 1684.

PROLOGUE.

LADIES! (I hope there's none behind to
hear,)

I long to whisper something in your ear,
A secret, which does much my mind per-
plex:

There's treason in the play against our
sex.

A man that's false to love, that vows and
cheats,

And kisses every living thing he meets;
A rogue in mode, I dare not speak too
broad,

One that does something to the very bawd.
Out on him, traitor, for a filthy beast!

Nay, and he's like the pack of all the
rest: 10

None of 'em stick at mark; they all de-
ceive.

Some Jew has changed the text, I half
believe;

Their Adam cozened our poor grandame
Eve.

To hide their faults they rap out oaths, and
tear;

Now though we lie, we're too well-bred to
swear.

So we compound for half the sin we owe,
But men are dipt for soul and body too;

And, when found out, excuse themselves,
pox cant 'em!

With Latin stuff, *Perjuria ridet amantem*.

* Count Teckell headed an insurrection against the Hungarian Government in 1683. He allied himself with the Turks, and besieged Vienna with a large Moslem army.

† Supposed to mean Shaftesbury.

I'm not book-learned, to know that word
in vogue, 20
But I suspect 'tis Latin for a rogue.
I'm sure, I never heard that scritch-owl
hollowed
In my poor ears, but separation followed.
How can such perjured villains e'er be
savèd?
Achitophel's not half so false to David.
With vows and soft expressions to allure,
They stand, like foreman of a shop,
demure:
No sooner out of sight, but they are
gadding.
And for the next new face ride out a
padding.
Yet, by their favour, when they have been
kissing, 30
We can perceive the ready money missing.
Well! we may rail; but 'tis as good e'en
wink;
Something we find, and something they
will sink.
But, since they're at renouncing, 'tis our
parts
To trump their diamonds, as they trump
our hearts.

EPILOGUE.

A qualm of conscience brings me back
agen,
To make amends to you bespattered men.
We women love like cats, that hide their
joys
By growling, squalling, and a hideous
noise.
I railed at wild young sparks; but without
lying,
Never was man worse thought on for high-
flying.
The prodigal of love gives each her part,
And squandering shows at least a noble
heart.
I've heard of men, who, in some lewd
lampoon,
Have hired a friend to make their valour
known. 10

That accusation straight this question brings,
What is the man that does such naughty
things?

The spaniel lover, like a sneaking fop,
Lies at our feet; he's scarce worth taking up.
'Tis true, such heroes in a play go far;
But chamber practice is not like the bar.
When men such vile, such faint petitions
make,
We fear to give, because they fear to take;
Since modesty's the virtue of our kind,
Pray let it be to our own sex confined. 20
When men usurp it from the female nation,
'Tis but a work of supererogation.
We showed a princess in the play, 'tis true,
Who gave her Caesar more than all his due;
Told her own faults; but I should much
abhor
To choose a husband for my confessor.
You see what fate followed the saint-like
fool,
For telling tales from out the nuptial school.
Our play a merry comedy had proved,
Had she confessed as much to him she
loved. 30
True Presbyterian wives the means would
try;
But damned confessing is flat Popery.

PROLOGUE TO

"ARVIRAGUS AND PHILICIA"

REVIVED.*

[BY LODOWICK CARLELL, ESQ.]

Spoken by MR. HART.

WITH sickly actors and an old house too,
We're matched with glorious theatres and
new,
And with our alehouse scenes, and clothes
bare worn,
Can neither raise old plays, nor new adorn.

* This tragedy was first acted at Blackfriars
in 1639, and revived with success in 1690.—
DERRICK.

If all these ills could not undo us quite,
A brisk French troop is grown your dear
delight ;
Who with broad bloody bills call you each
day,
To laugh and break your buttons at their
play ;
Or see some serious piece, which we presume
Is fallen from some incomparable plume ; 10
And therefore, Messieurs, if you'll do us
grace,
Send lackeys early to preserve your place.
We dare not on your privilege intrench,
Or ask you why you like them ? they are
French.
Therefore some go with courtesy exceeding,
Neither to hear nor see, but show their
breeding :
Each lady striving to out-laugh the rest ;
To make it seem they understood the jest.
Their countrymen come in, and nothing pay,
To teach us English whereto clap the play : 20
Civil, egad ! our hospitable land
Bears all the charge, for them to under-
stand :
Meantime we languish, and neglected lie,
Like wives, while you keep better company ;
And wish for your own sakes, without a
satire,
You'd less good breeding, or had more
good-nature.

PROLOGUE TO

"THE PROPHETESS."*

[BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.] REVIVED BY
MR. DRYDEN.

Spoken by MR. BETTERTON.

WHAT Nostradame, with all his art, can
guess
The fate of our approaching Prophetess ?
A play, which, like a perspective set right,
Presents our vast expenses close to sight ;

* "The Prophetess, or the History of Diocletian," was revived in 1690, with alterations and additions, after the manner of an opera, by Mr. Betterton, and not by Dryden.—DERRICK.

But turn the tube, and there we sadly view
Our distant gains ; and those uncertain too :
A sweeping tax, which on ourselves we
raise,
And all, like you, in hopes of better days.
When will our losses warn us to be wise ?
Our wealth decreases, and our charges
rise. 10
Money, the sweet allurer of our hopes,
Ebbs out in oceans, and comes in by drops.
We raise new objects to provoke delight ;
But you grow sated, ere the second sight.
False men, e'en so you serve your mis-
tresses :
They rise three stories in their towering
dress ;
And, after all, you love not long enough
To pay the rigging, ere you leave them off.
Never content with what you had before,
But true to change, and Englishmen all
o'er. 20
Now honour calls you hence ; and all your
care
Is to provide the horrid pomp of war.
In plume and scarf, jack-boots, and Bilbo
blade,
Your silver goes, that should support our
trade.
Go, unkind heroes, leave our stage to
mourn ;
'Till rich from vanquished rebels you return :
And the fat spoils of Teague in triumph
draw,
His firkin-butter, and his usquebaugh.
Go, conquerors of your male and female
foes ;
Men without hearts, and women without
hose. 30
Each bring his love a Bogland captive
home ;
Such proper pages will long trains become ;
With copper collars, and with brawny
backs,
Quite to put down the fashion of our
blacks.†

† It was the fashion of the day to have negro pages wearing silver collars.

Then shall the pious Muses pay their vows,
And furnish all their laurels for your brows;
Their tuneful voice shall rise for your
delights;

We want not poets fit to sing your flights.
But you, bright beauties, for whose only
sake

Those doughty knights such dangers under-
take, 40

When they with happy gales are gone away,
With your propitious presence grace our
play;

And with a sigh their empty seats survey:
Then think—on that bare bench my servant
sat;

I see him ogle still, and hear him chat;
Selling facetious bargains, and propounding
That witty recreation, called dumb-found-
ing.

Their loss with patience we will try to bear;
And would do more, to see you often here:
That our dead stage, revived by your fair
eyes, 50

Under a female regency may rise.

PROLOGUE TO

"THE MISTAKES."*

1690.

Enter MR. BRIGHT.

GENTLEMEN, we must beg your pardon;
here's no Prologue to be had to-day; our
new play is like to come on, without a
frontispiece; as bald as one of you young
beaux, without your periwig. I left our
young poet, snivelling and sobbing behind
the scenes, and cursing somebody that has
deceived him.

Enter MR. BOWEN.

Hold your prating to the audience: here's
honest Mr. Williams, just come in, half-
mellow, from the Rose Tavern. He swears

he is inspired with claret, and will come on,
and that extempore too, either with a pro-
logue of his own, or something like one.
Oh, here he comes to his trial, at all adven-
tures; for my part I wish him a good
deliverance.

[Exeunt MR. BRIGHT and MR. BOWEN.]

Enter MR. WILLIAMS.

Save ye, sirs, save ye! I am in a hopeful
way.

I should speak something, in rhyme, now,
for the play:

But the deuce take me, if I know what to
say.

I'll stick to my friend the author, that I can
tell ye,

To the last drop of claret, in my belly.

So far I'm sure 'tis rhyme—that needs no
granting:

And, if my verses' feet stumble—you see
my own are wanting.

Our young poet has brought a piece of work,
In which, though much of art there does
not lurk,

It may hold out three days—and that's as
long as Cork.† 10

But, for this play—(which till I have done,
we show not)

What may be its fortune—by the Lord—
I know not.

This I dare swear, no malice here is writ:

'Tis innocent of all things; even of wit.

He's no high-flier; he makes no sky-rockets,

His squibs are only levelled at your pockets,

And if his crackers light among your pelf,

You are blown up; if not, then he's blown
up himself.

By this time, I'm something recovered of
my flustered madness:

And now a word or two in sober sadness. 20

Ours is a common play; and you pay
down

A common harlot's price; just half-a-crown.

† The siege of Cork lasted only four days,
from September 23 to 25. It was Marlborough's
first victory.

* Written or arranged by Joseph Harris. *

You'll say, I play the pimp, on my friend's score;
But since 'tis for a friend, your gibes give o'er:
For many a mother has done that before.
How's this, you cry? an actor write? we know it;
But Shakspeare was an actor, and a poet.
Has not great Jonson's learning often failed?
But Shakspeare's greater genius still prevailed.
Have not some writing actors, in this age, so
Deserved and found success upon the stage?
To tell the truth, when our old wits are tired,
Not one of us but means to be inspired.
Let your kind presence grace our homely cheer;
Peace and the butt is all our business here:
So much for that;—and the devil take small beer.

A PROLOGUE.

GALLANTS! a bashful poet bids me say,
He's come to lose his maidenhead to-day.
Be not too fierce, for he's but green of age,
And ne'er, till now, debauched upon the stage:
He wants the suffering part of resolution,
And comes with blushes to his execution.
Ere you deflower his Muse, he hopes the pit
Will make some settlement upon his wit,
Promise him well, before the play begin;
For he would fain be cozened into sin. 10
'Tis not but that he knows you mean to fail;
But if you leave him after being frail,
He'll have at least a fair pretence to rail;
To call you base, and swear you used him ill,
And put you in the new Deserters' Bill.
Lord, what a troop of perjured men we see,
Enough to fill another Mercury!

But this the ladies may with patience brook;
Theirs are not the first colours you forsook.
He would be loth the beauties to offend, so
But, if he should, he's not too old to mend.
He's a young plant, in his first year of bearing,
But his friend swears he will be worth the rearing.
His gloss is still upon him; though 'tis true
He's yet unripe, yet take him for the blue.
You think an apricot half green is best;
There's sweet and sour, and one side good at least.
Mangoes and limes whose nourishment is little,
Though not for food, are yet preserved for pickle:
So this green writer may pretend, at least, so
To whet your stomachs for a better feast.
He makes this difference in the sexes too,
He sells to men, he gives himself to you.
To both he would contribute some delight,
A mere poetical hermaphrodite.
Thus he's equipped, both to be wooed and woo,
With arms offensive and defensive too:
'Tis hard, he thinks, if neither part will do.

EPILOGUE TO

"HENRY II."

[BY MR. MOUNTFORT, * 1693.]

Spoken by MRS. BRACEGIRDLE.

THUS you the sad catastrophe have seen,
Occasioned by a mistress and a queen.
Queen Eleanor the proud was French, they say;
But English manufacture got the day.
Jane Clifford was her name, as books aver:
Fair Rosamond was but her *nom de guerre*.

* Scott says it was written by John Bancroft, and that he gave the play to Mountfort the comedian.

Now tell me, gallants, would you lead your
life

With such a mistress, or with such a
wife!

If one must be your choice, which d'ye
approve,

The curtain lecture, or the curtain love! 10
Would ye be godly with perpetual strife,
Still drudging on with homely Joan your
wife;

Or take your pleasure in a wicked way,
Like honest whoring Harry in the play?
I guess your minds: the mistress would be
taken,

And nauseous matrimony sent a packing.
The devil's in you all; mankind's a rogue;
You love the bride, but you detest the
clog.

After a year, poor spouse is left i' the
lurch,

And you, like Haynes,* return to mother-
Church. 20

Or, if the name of Church comes cross your
mind,

Chapels of ease behind our scenes you
find.

The playhouse is a kind of market-place;
One chaffers for a voice, another for a
face:

Nay, some of you, I dare not say how
many,

Would buy of me a pen'orth for your
penny.

E'en this poor face, which with my fan I
hide,

Would make a shift my portion to provide,
With some small perquisites I have be-
side.

Though for your love, perhaps, I should
not care, 30

I could not hate a man that bids me fair.
What might ensue, 'tis hard for me to
tell:

But I was drenched to-day for loving well,
And fear the poison that would make me
swell.

PROLOGUE TO

"ALBUMAZAR."†

To say, this comedy pleased long ago,
Is not enough to make it pass you now.

Yet, gentlemen, your ancestors had wit;
When few men censured, and when fewer
writ.

And Jonson, of those few the best, chose
this,

As the best model of his masterpiece.

Subtle was got by our Albumazar,

That Alchymist by this Astrologer;

Here he was fashioned, and we may suppose
He liked the fashion well, who wore the
clothes. 10

But Ben made nobly his what he did
mould;

What was another's lead, becomes his gold:

Like an unrighteous conqueror he reigns,

Yet rules that well, which he unjustly gains.

But this our age such authors does afford,

As make whole plays, and yet scarce write
one word:

Who, in this anarchy of wit, rob all,

And what's their plunder, their possession
call;

Who, like bold padders, scorn by night to
prey,

But rob by sunshine, in the face of day: 20

Nay, scarce the common ceremony use

Of, Stand, sir, and deliver up your Muse;

But knock the Poet down, and, with a
grace,

Mount Pegasus before the author's face.

Faith, if you have such country Toms‡
abroad,

'Tis time for all true men to leave that road.

Yet it were modest, could it but be said,

They strip the living, but these rob the
dead;

* Haynes became a Roman Catholic, and re-
turned to the English Church.

† "Albumazar" was written by Mr. Tomkins,
and acted before James I. in 1614. It proved
not a success when it was thus revived.

‡ A cant name for highwaymen. Shadwell's
christian name was Thomas.

Dare with the mummies of the Muses play,
And make love to them the Egyptian
way ;
Or, as a rhyming author would have said,
Join the dead living to the living dead.
Such men in Poetry may claim some part :
They have the licence, though they want
the art ;
And might, where theft was praised, for
Laureats stand,
Poets, not of the head, but of the hand.
They make the benefits of others' studying,
Much like the meals of politic Jack-Pudding,
Whose dish to challenge no man has the
courage ;
'Tis all his own, when once he has spit i'
the porridge.
But, gentlemen, you're all concerned in this ;
You are in fault for what they do amiss :
For they their thefts still undiscovered think,
And durst not steal, unless you please to
wink.
Perhaps, you may award by your decree,
They should refund ; but that can never be.
For should you letters of reprisal seal,
These men write that which no man else
would steal.

AN EPILOGUE.

You saw our wife was chaste, yet thoroughly
tried,
And, without doubt, you're hugely edified ;
For, like our hero, whom we showed to-day,
You think no woman true, but in a play.
Love once did make a pretty kind of show :
Esteem and kindness in one breast would
grow :
But 'twas Heaven knows how many years
ago.
Now some small chat, and guinea expecta-
tion,
Gets all the pretty creatures in the nation :
In comedy your little selves you meet ;
'Tis Covent Garden drawn in Bridges
Street.

Smile on our author then, if he has shown
A jolly nut-brown bastard of your own.
Ah ! happy you, with ease and with delight,
Who act those follies, Poets toil to write !
The sweating Muse does almost leave the
chase ;
She puffs, and hardly keeps your Protean
vices pace.
Pinch you but in one vice, away you fly
To some new frisk of contrariety.
You roll like snow-balls, gathering as you
run,
And get seven devils, when dispossessed of
one.
Your Venus once was a Platonic queen :
Nothing of love beside the face was seen ;
But every inch of her you now uncase,
And clap a vizard-mask upon the face.
For sins like these, the zealous of the land,
With little hair, and little or no band,
Declare how circulating pestilences
Watch, every twenty years, to snap offences.
Saturn, e'en now, takes doctoral degrees ;
He'll do your work this summer without
fees.
Let all the boxes, Phœbus, find thy grace,
And, ah, preserve the eighteen-penny place !
But for the pit confounders, let 'em go,
And find as little mercy as they show :
The Actors thus, and thus thy Poets pray :
For every critic saved, thou damn'st a play.

EPILOGUE TO

"THE HUSBAND HIS OWN CUCKOLD." *

1696.

LIKE some raw sophister that mounts the
pulpit,
So trembles a young Poet at a full pit.
Unused to crowds, the Parson quakes for
fear,
And wonders how the devil he durst come
there ;

* Written by Dryden's son.

Wanting three talents needful for the place,
Some beard, some learning, and some little
grace.

Nor is the puny Poet void of care ;
For authors, such as our new authors are,
Have not much learning, nor much wit to
spare :

And as for grace, to tell the truth, there's
scarce one, 10

But has as little as the very Parson :
Both say, they preach and write for your
instruction :

But 'tis for a third day, and for induction.
The difference is, that though you like the
play,

The Poet's gain is ne'er beyond his day.
But with the Parson 'tis another case,
He, without holiness, may rise to grace ;
The Poet has one disadvantage more,
That, if his play be dull, he's damned all
o'er,

Not only a damned blockhead, but damned
poor. 20

But dulness well becomes the sable garment ;
I warrant that ne'er spoiled a Priest's
preferment !

Wit's not his business, and as wit now goes,
Sirs, 'tis not so much yours as you suppose,
For you like nothing now but nauseous
beaux.

You laugh not, gallants, as by proof appears,
At what his beauship says, but what he
wears :

So 'tis your eyes are tickled, not your ears :
The tailor and the furrier find the stuff,
The wit lies in the dress, and monstrous
muff. 30

The truth on 't is, the payment of the pit
Is like for like, clipt money for clipt wit.
You cannot from our absent author hope,
He should equip the stage with such a fop :
Fools change in England, and new fools
arise,

For though the immortal species never dies,
Yet every year new maggots make new flies.
But where he lives abroad, he scarce can
find

One fool, for million that he left behind.

PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE TO

"THE PILGRIM,"*

REVIVED FOR OUR AUTHOR'S BENEFIT,
ANNO 1700.

How wretched is the fate of those who
write !

Brought muzzled to the stage, for fear they
bite.

Where, like Tom Dove,† they stand the
common foe ;

Lugged by the critic, baited by the beau.
Yet worse, their brother Poets damn the
Play,

And roar the loudest, though they never
pay.

The fops are proud of scandal, for they cry,
At every lewd, low character—That's I.

He, who writes letters to himself, would
swear,

The world forgot him, if he was not there. 10
What should a Poet do ? 'Tis hard for one
To pleasure all the fools that would be
shown :

And yet not two in ten will pass the town.
Most coxcombs are not of the laughing
kind ;

More goes to make a fop, than fops can
find.

Quack Maurus,‡ though he never took
degrees

In either of our universities ;
Yet to be shown by some kind wit he looks,
Because he played the fool, and writ three
books.

But, if he would be worth a Poet's pen, 20
He must be more a fool, and write again :

* This play, with alterations by Sir John Vanbrugh, and a secular masque, together with this prologue and an epilogue written by our author, was revived for his benefit in 1700, his fortune being at that time in as declining a state as his health : they were both spoken by Mr. Cibber, then a very young actor, much to Dryden's satisfaction.—DENNICK.

† The name of a bear often baited.

‡ Sir Richard Blackmore. He wrote a satire against Wit, in which he spoke against Dryden.

For all the former fustian stuff he wrote,
Was dead-born doggerel, or is quite for-
got;

His man of Uz, stript of his Hebrew
robe,

Is just the proverb, and as poor as Job.
Que would have thought he could no longer
jog;

But Arthur was a level, Job 's a bog.
There, though he crept, yet still he kept in
sight;

But here he founders in, and sinks down
right.

Had he prepared us, and been dull by
rule,

Tobit had first been turned to ridicule :
But our bold Brition, without fear or awe.
O'erleaps at once the whole Apocrypha ;
Invades the Psalms with rhymes, and leaves
no room

For any Vandal Hopkins yet to come.

But when, if, after all, this godly gear
Is not so senseless as it would appear ;
Our mountebank has laid a deeper train,
His cant, like Merry Andrew's noble vein,
Cat-calls the sects to draw 'em in again. 40
At leisure hours, in epic song he deals,
Writes to the rumbling of his coach's
wheels,

Prescribes in haste, and seldom kills by
rule,

But rides triumphant between stool and
stool.

Well, let him go ; 'tis yet too early day,
To get himself a place in farce or play.

We know not by what name we should
arraign him,

For no one category can contain him ;
A pedant, canting preacher, and a quack,
Are load enough to break one ass's
back :

At last grown wanton, he presumed to
write,

Traduced two kings, their kindness to
requite ;

One made the doctor, and one dubbed the
knight.

EPILOGUE.

Perhaps the parson * stretched a point too
far,

When with our Theatres he waged a war.
He tells you, that this very moral age
Received the first infection from the Stage.
But sure, a banished court, with lewdness
fraught,

The seeds of open vice, returning, brought.
Thus lodged (as vice by great example
thrives)

It first debauched the daughters and the
wives.

London, a fruitful soil, yet never bore
So plentiful a crop of horns before. 10

The Poets, who must live by courts, or
starve,

Were proud so good a government to
serve;

And, mixing with buffoons and pimps
profane,

Tainted the Stage, for some small snip of
gain.

For they, like harlots, under bawds pro-
fessed,

Took all the ungodly pains, and got the
least.

Thus did the thriving malady prevail,
The court, its head, the Poets but the tail.

The sin was of our native growth, 'tis
true :

The scandal of the sin was wholly new. 20
Misses they were, but modestly concealed ;

Whitehall the naked Venus first revealed.
Who standing as at Cyprus, in her shrine,

The strumpet was adored with rites divine.
Ere this, if saints had any secret motion,

'Twas chamber-practice all, and close
devotion.

I pass the peccadillos of their time ;
Nothing but open lewdness was a crime.

A monarch's blood was venial to the
nation,

Compared with one foul act of fornication. 30

* Jeremy Collier, who wrote upon the vices of
the stage, and did much to reform it.

Now, they would silence us, and shut the door,

That let in all the barefaced vice before.

As for reforming us, which some pretend,

That work in England is without an end :

Well may we change, but we shall never mend.

Yet, if you can but bear the present Stage,

We hope much better of the coming age.

What would you say, if we should first begin

To stop the trade of love behind the scene :

Where actresses make bold with married men ?

For while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.

In short, we'll grow as moral as we can,

Save here and there a woman or a man :

But neither you, nor we, with all our pains,
Can make clean work ; there will be some remains,

While you have still your Oates, and we our Haines.*

* A Tory writer so named was a witness against Shaftesbury ; Scott thought he might be meant here.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

THEOCRITUS, LUCRETIUS, HORACE, OVID AND HOMER.

NOTE.

*The translations from the Classics, made by Dryden, are here collected together in one place, instead of being divided as in other editions. They include those from Theocritus, Lucretius, Horace, Ovid and Homer. The Satires of Juvenal and Persius, and the Virgil, are not given ; but a careful selection has been made from Ovid's Metamorphoses. Cowley and Dryden were the first English translators who endeavoured to give the spirit rather than the words of their authors ; before Dryden's translations appeared, the rendering of the poets had been nearly verbal, or, at least, so close as to become stiff, and far from poetical. The passages from Virgil are omitted, as he afterwards translated the whole of the *Æneids*.*

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

THEOCRITUS, LUCRETIUS, AND HORACE.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND MISCELLANY.

FOR this last half year I have been troubled with the disease (as I may call it) of translation. The cold prose fits of it, which are always the most tedious with me, were spent in THE HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE; the hot which succeeded them, in this volume of Verse Miscellanies. The truth is, I fancied to myself, a kind of ease in the change of the paroxysm; never suspecting but the humour would have wasted itself in two or three pastorals of Theocritus, and as many odes of Horace. But finding, or at least thinking I found, something that was more pleasing in them than my ordinary productions, I encouraged myself to renew my old acquaintance with Lucretius and Virgil; and immediately fixed upon some parts of them, which had most affected me in the reading. These were my natural impulses for the undertaking; but there was an accidental motive which was full as forcible, and God forgive him who was the occasion of it. It was my Lord Roscommon's Essay on Translated Verse; which made me uneasy till I tried whether or no I was capable of following his rules, and of reducing the speculation into practice. For many a fair precept in Poetry is like a seeming demonstration in the Mathematics, very specious in the diagram, but failing in the mechanic operation. I think I have generally observed his instructions; I am sure my reason is sufficiently convinced both of their truth and usefulness; which, in other words, is to confess no less a vanity, than to pretend that I have at least in some places made examples to his rules. Yet, withal, I must acknowledge that I have many times exceeded my commission; for I have both added and omitted, and even sometimes very boldly made such expositions of my authors, as no Dutch commentator will forgive me. Perhaps, in such particular passages, I have thought that I discovered some beauty yet undiscovered by those pedants, which none but a Poet could have found. Where I have taken away some of their expressions, and cut them shorter, it may possibly be on this consideration, that what was beautiful in the Greek or Latin, would not appear so shining in the English; and where I have enlarged them, I desire the false critics would not always think, that those thoughts are wholly mine, but that either they are secretly in the Poet, or may be fairly deduced from him; or at least, if both those con-

siderations should fail, that my own is of a piece with his, and that if he were living, and an Englishman, they are such as he would probably have written.

For, after all, a translator is to make his author appear as charming as possibly he can, provided he maintains his character, and makes him not unlike himself. Translation is a kind of drawing after the life, where every one will acknowledge there is a double sort of likeness, a good one and a bad. 'Tis one thing to draw the outlines true, the features like, the proportions exact, the colouring itself perhaps tolerable; and another thing to make all these graceful, by the posture, the shadowings, and chiefly by the spirit which animates the whole. I cannot, without some indignation, look on an ill copy of an excellent original. Much less can I behold with patience Virgil, Homer, and some others, whose beauties I have been endeavouring all my life to imitate, so abused, as I may say, to their faces, by a botching interpreter. What English readers, unacquainted with Greek or Latin, will believe me, or any other man, when we commend those authors, and confess we derive all that is pardonable in us from their fountains, if they take those to be the same Poets, whom our Ogilbys have translated? But I dare assure them, that a good Poet is no more like himself, in a dull translation, than his carcase would be to his living body. There are many, who understand Greek and Latin, and yet are ignorant of their mother-tongue. The proprieties and delicacies of the English are known to few: 'tis impossible even for a good wit to understand and practise them, without the help of a liberal education, long reading, and digesting of those few good authors we have amongst us, the knowledge of men and manners, the freedom of habitudes and conversation with the best company of both sexes; and, in short, without wearing off the rust, which he contracted, while he was laying in a stock of learning. Thus difficult it is to understand the purity of English, and critically to discern not only good writers from bad, and a proper style from a corrupt, but also to distinguish that which is pure in a good author, from that which is vicious and corrupt in him. And for want of all these requisites, or the greatest part of them, most of our ingenious young men take up some cried-up English Poet for their model, adore him, and imitate him, as they think, without knowing wherein he is defective, where he is boyish and trifling, wherein either his thoughts are improper to his subjects, or his expressions unworthy of his thoughts, or the turn of both is unharmonious.

Thus it appears necessary that a man should be a nice critic in his mother-tongue, before he attempts to translate a foreign language. Neither is it sufficient, that he be able to judge of words and style; but he must be a master of them too: he must perfectly understand his author's tongue, and absolutely command his own. So that, to be a thorough translator, he must be a thorough Poet. Neither is it enough to give his author's sense in good English, in poetical expressions, and in musical numbers: for, though all these are exceeding difficult to perform, there yet remains an harder task; and 'tis a secret of which few translators have sufficiently thought. I have already hinted a word or two concerning it; that is, the maintaining the character of an author, which distinguishes him from all others, and makes him appear that individual poet, whom you would interpret. For example, not only the thoughts, but the style and versification of Virgil and Ovid, are very different: yet I see, even in our best poets, who have translated some parts of them, that they have confounded their several talents; and, by endeavouring only at the sweetness and harmony of numbers, have made them both so much alike, that if I did not know the originals, I should never be able to judge by the copies, which was Virgil, and which was Ovid. It was objected against a late

noble painter,* that he drew many graceful pictures, but few of them were like. And this happened to him, because he always studied himself, more than those who sat to him. In such translators I can easily distinguish the hand which performed the work, but I cannot distinguish their poet from another. Suppose two authors are equally sweet, yet there is as great distinction to be made in sweetness, as in that of sugar, and that of honey. I can make the difference more plain, by giving you (if it be worth knowing) my own method of proceeding, in my translations out of four several poets in this volume—Virgil, Theocritus, Lucretius, and Horace. In each of these, before I undertook them, I considered the genius and distinguishing character of my author. I looked on Virgil as a succinct, grave, and majestic writer; one who weighed not only every thought, but every word and syllable: who was still aiming to crowd his sense into as narrow a compass as possibly he could; for which reason he is so very figurative, that he requires (I may almost say) a grammar apart to construe him. His verse is everywhere sounding the very thing in your ears, whose sense it bears: yet the numbers are perpetually varied, to increase the delight of the reader; so that the same sounds are never repeated twice together. On the contrary, Ovid and Claudian, though they write in styles differing from each other, yet have each of them but one sort of music in their verses. All the versification and little variety of Claudian is included within the compass of four or five lines, and then he begins again in the same tenour; perpetually closing his sense at the end of a verse, and that verse commonly which they call golden, or two substantives and two adjectives, with a verb betwixt them to keep the peace. Ovid, with all his sweetness, has as little variety of numbers and sound as he: he is always, as it were, upon the hand-gallop, and his verse runs upon carpet-ground. He avoids, like the others, all Synalophas, or cutting off one vowel when it comes before another, in the following word; so that minding only smoothness, he wants both variety and majesty. But to return to Virgil: though he is smooth where smoothness is required, yet he is so far from affecting it, that he seems rather to disdain it; frequently makes use of Synalophas, and concludes his sense in the middle of his verse. He is everywhere above conceits of epigrammatic wit, and gross hyperboles; he maintains majesty in the midst of plainness; he shines, but glares not; and is stately without ambition (which is the vice of Lucan). I drew my definition of poetical wit from my particular consideration of him: for propriety of thoughts and words are only to be found in him; and where they are proper they will be delightful. Pleasure follows of necessity, as the effect does the cause; and therefore is not to be put into the definition. This exact propriety of Virgil I particularly regarded, as a great part of his character; but must confess, to my shame, that I have not been able to translate any part of him so well, as to make him appear wholly like himself. For where the original is close, no version can reach it in the same compass. Hannibal Caro's, in the Italian, is the nearest, the most poetical, and the most sonorous of any translation of the *Æneids*: yet, though he takes the advantage of blank verse, he commonly allows two lines for one of Virgil, and does not always hit his sense. Tasso tells us, in his letters, that Sperone Speroni, a great Italian wit, who was his contemporary, observed of Virgil and Tully, that the Latin orator endeavoured to imitate the copiousness of Homer, the Greek poet; and that the Latin poet made it his business to reach the conciseness of Demosthenes, the Greek orator. Virgil therefore, being so very sparing of his words, and leaving so much to be imagined by the reader, can never be translated as he ought, in any modern tongue. To make him copious, is to alter his

* Sir P. Lely.

character; and to translate him line for line is impossible; because the Latin is naturally a more succinct language than either the Italian, Spanish, French, or even than the English, which, by reason of its monosyllables, is far the most compendious of them. Virgil is much the closest of any Roman poet, and the Latin hexameter has more feet than the English heroic.

Besides all this, an author has the choice of his own thoughts and words, which a translator has not; he is confined by the sense of the inventor to those expressions which are the nearest to it: so that Virgil, studying brevity, and having the command of his own language, could bring those words into a narrow compass, which a translator cannot render without circumlocutions. In short, they, who have called him the torture of grammarians, might also have called him the plague of translators; for he seems to have studied not to be translated. I own that, endeavouring to turn his "Nisus and Euryalus" as close as I was able, I have performed that Episode too literally; that, giving more scope to "Mezentius and Lausus," that version which has more of the majesty of Virgil, has less of his conciseness; and all that I can promise for myself, is only that I have done both better than Ogilby, and perhaps as well as Caro. So that, methinks, I come like a malefactor, to make a speech upon the gallows, and to warn all other poets, by my sad example, from the sacrilege of translating Virgil. Yet, by considering him so carefully as I did before my attempt, I have made some faint resemblance of him; and, had I taken more time, might possibly have succeeded better; but never so well, as to have satisfied myself.

He who excels all other poets in his own language, were it possible to do him right, must appear above them in our tongue; which, as my Lord Roscommon justly observes, approaches nearest to the Roman in its majesty: nearest indeed, but with a vast interval betwixt them. There is an inimitable grace in Virgil's words, and in them principally consists that beauty, which gives so inexpressible a pleasure to him who best understands their force. This diction of his, I must once again say, is never to be copied; and, since it cannot, he will appear but lame in the best translation. The turns of his verse, his breakings, his propriety, his numbers, and his gravity, I have as far imitated as the poverty of our language, and the hastiness of my performance, would allow. I may seem sometimes to have varied from his sense; but I think the greatest variations may be fairly deduced from him; and where I leave his commentators, it may be I understand him better: at least I writ without consulting them in many places. But two particular lines in "Mezentius and Lausus" I cannot so easily excuse. They are indeed remotely allied to Virgil's sense; but they are too like the tenderness of Ovid, and were printed before I had considered them enough to alter them. The first of them I have forgotten, and cannot easily retrieve, because the copy is at the press; the second is this:—

"When Lausus died, I was already slain."

This appears pretty enough at first sight; but I am convinced, for many reasons, that the expression is too bold; that Virgil would not have said it, though Ovid would. The reader may pardon it, if he please, for the freeness of the confession; and instead of that, and the former, admit these two lines, which are more according to the author.—

"Nor ask I life, nor fought with that design;
As I had used my fortune use thou thine."

Having with much ado got clear of Virgil, I have in the next place to consider the

genius of Lucretius, whom I have translated more happily in those parts of him which I undertook. If he was not of the best age of Roman Poetry, he was at least of that which preceded it; and he himself refined it to that degree of perfection, both in the language and the thoughts, that he left an easy task to Virgil; who, as he succeeded him in time, so he copied his excellencies; for the method of the *Georgics* is plainly derived from him. Lucretius had chosen a subject naturally crabbed; he therefore adorned it with poetical descriptions, and precepts of morality in the beginning and ending of his books, which you see Virgil has imitated with great success, in those four books, which in my opinion are more perfect in their kind than even his divine *Æneids*. The turn of his verse he has likewise followed, in those places which Lucretius has most laboured, and some of his very lines he has transplanted into his own works, without much variation. If I am not mistaken, the distinguishing character of Lucretius (I mean of his soul and genius) is a certain kind of noble pride, and positive assertion of his opinions. He is everywhere confident of his own reason, and assuming an absolute command, not only over his vulgar reader, but even his patron Memmius. For he is always bidding him attend, as if he had the rod over him, and using a magisterial authority, while he instructs him. From his time to ours, I know none so like him, as our Poet and Philosopher of Malmsbury. This is that perpetual dictatorship, which is exercised by Lucretius; who, though often in the wrong, yet seems to deal *bonâ fide* with his reader, and tells him nothing but what he thinks: in which plain sincerity, I believe, he differs from our Hobbes, who could not but be convinced, or at least doubt of some eternal truths, which he has opposed. But for Lucretius, he seems to disdain all manner of replies, and is so confident of his cause, that he is beforehand with his antagonists, urging for them whatever he imagined they could say, and leaving them, as he supposes, without an objection for the future: all this, too, with so much scorn and indignation, as if he were assured of the triumph before he entered into the lists. From this sublime and daring genius of his, it must of necessity come to pass, that his thoughts must be masculine, full of argumentation, and that sufficiently warm. From the same fiery temper proceeds the loftiness of his expressions, and the perpetual torrent of his verse, where the barrenness of his subject does not too much constrain the quickness of his fancy. For there is no doubt to be made, but that he could have been everywhere as poetical, as he is in his descriptions, and in the moral part of his Philosophy, if he had not aimed more to instruct, in his "System of Nature," than to delight. But he was bent upon making Memmius a materialist, and teaching him to defy an invisible Power. In short, he was so much an atheist, that he forgot sometimes to be a poet. These are the considerations, which I had of that author, before I attempted to translate some parts of him. And, accordingly, I laid by my natural diffidence and scepticism for awhile, to take up that dogmatical way of his, which, as I said, is so much his character, as to make him that individual Poet. As for his opinions concerning the mortality of the soul, they are so absurd, that I cannot, if I would, believe them. I think a future state demonstrable even by natural arguments; at least, to take away rewards and punishments, is only a pleasing prospect to a man, who resolves beforehand not to live morally. But, on the other side, the thought of being nothing after death is a burthen insupportable to a virtuous man, even though a heathen. We naturally aim at happiness, and cannot bear to have it confined to the shortness of our present being, especially when we consider, that virtue is generally unhappy in this world, and vice fortunate: so that 'tis hope of futurity alone, that makes this life tolerable, in expectation of a better. Who would not commit all the

excesses, to which he is prompted by his natural inclinations, if he may do them with security while he is alive, and be incapable of punishment after he is dead? If he be cunning and secret enough to avoid the laws, there is no band of morality to restrain him: for fame and reputation are weak ties: many men have not the least sense of them: powerful men are only awed by them, as they conduce to their interest, and that not always, when a passion is predominant: and no man will be contained within the bounds of duty, when he may safely transgress them. These are my thoughts abstractedly, and without entering into the notions of our Christian faith, which is the proper business of divines.

But there are other arguments in this poem (which I have turned into English) not belonging to the mortality of the soul, which are strong enough to a reasonable man, to make him less in love with life, and consequently in less apprehensions of death. Such as are the natural satiety proceeding from a perpetual enjoyment of the same things; the inconveniences of old age, which make him incapable of corporeal pleasures; the decay of understanding and memory, which render him contemptible, and useless to others. These, and many other reasons, so pathetically urged, so beautifully expressed, so adorned with examples, and so admirably raised by the *Prosopopeia* of Nature, who is brought in speaking to her children, with so much authority and vigour, deserve the pains I have taken with them, which I hope have not been unsuccessful or unworthy of my author: at least I must take the liberty to own, that I was pleased with my own endeavours, which but rarely happens to me; and that I am not dissatisfied upon the review of any thing I have done in this author.

It is true, there is something, and that of some moment, to be objected against my Englishing the "Nature of Love,"* from the fourth book of Lucretius: and I can less easily answer why I translated it, than why I thus translated it. The objection arises from the obscenity of the subject; which is aggravated by the too lively and alluring delicacy of the verses. In the first place, without the least formality of an excuse, I own it pleased me: and let my enemies make the worst they can of this confession: I am not yet so secure from that passion, but that I want my author's antidotes against it. He has given the truest and most philosophical account both of the disease and remedy, which I ever found in any author; for which reasons I translated him. But it will be asked why I turned him into this luscious English? for I will not give it a worse word. Instead of an answer, I would ask again of my supercilious adversaries, whether I am not bound, when I translate an author, to do him all the right I can, and to translate him to the best advantage? If, to mince his meaning, which I am satisfied was honest and instructive, I had either omitted some part of what he said, or taken from the strength of his expression, I certainly had wronged him; and that freeness of thought and words being thus cashiered in my hands, he had no longer been Lucretius. If nothing of this kind be to be read, physicians must not study nature, anatomies must not be seen, and somewhat I could say of particular passages in books, which, to avoid profaneness, I do not name. But the intention qualifies the act; and both mine and my author's were to instruct as well as please. It is most certain that barefaced bawdry is the poorest pretence to wit imaginable. If I should say otherwise, I should have two great authorities against me. The one is the Essay on Poetry, which I publicly valued before I knew the author of it, and with the commendation of which my Lord Roscommon so happily begins his Essay on Translated Verse: the other is no less than our

* Omitted in most modern editions.

admired Cowley, who says the same thing in other words : for in his Ode concerning Wit he writes thus of it :—

“ Much less can that have any place,
At which a virgin hides her face ;
Such dross the fire must purge away ; 'tis just
The author blush, there, where the reader must.”

Here indeed Mr. Cowley goes farther than the Essay : for he asserts plainly, that obscenity has no place in wit : the other only says, 'tis a poor pretence to wit, or an ill sort of wit, which has nothing more to support it than barefaced ribaldry ; which is both unmannerly in itself, and fulsome to the reader. But neither of these will reach my case : for, in the first place, I am only the translator, not the inventor ; so that the heaviest part of the censure falls upon Lucretius, before it reaches me ; in the next place, neither he nor I have used the grossest words, but the cleanest metaphors we could find, to palliate the broadness of the meaning ; and, to conclude, have carried the poetical part no farther, than the philosophical exacted.

There are a sort of blundering, half-witted people, who make a great deal of noise about a verbal slip : though Horace would instruct them better in true criticism :—

“ non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.”

True judgment in poetry, like that in painting, takes a view of the whole together, whether it be good or not ; and where the beauties are more than the faults, concludes for the poet against the little judge. It is a sign that malice is hard driven, when it is forced to lay hold on a word or syllable : to arraign a man is one thing, and to cavil at him is another. In the midst of an ill-natured generation of scribblers, there is always justice enough left in mankind, to protect good writers : and they too are obliged, both by humanity and interest, to espouse each other's cause against false critics, who are the common enemies.

This last consideration puts me in mind of what I owe to the ingenious and learned translator of Lucretius. I have not here designed to rob him of any part of that commendation which he has so justly acquired by the whole author, whose fragments only fall to my portion. What I have now performed, is no more than I intended above twenty years ago. The ways of our translation are very different ; he follows him more closely than I have done, which became an interpreter of the whole Poem : I take more liberty, because it best suited with my design, which was to make him as pleasing as I could. He had been too voluminous, had he used my method in so long a work ; and I had certainly taken his, had I made it my business to translate the whole. The preference, then, is justly his ; and I join with Mr. Evelyn in the confession of it, with this additional advantage to him, that his reputation is already established in this Poet, mine is to make its fortune in the world. If I have been anywhere obscure, in following our common author, or if Lucretius himself is to be condemned, I refer myself to his excellent annotations, which I have often read, and always with some new pleasure.

My preface begins already to swell upon me, and looks as if I were afraid of my reader, by so tedious a bespeaking of him : and yet I have Horace and Theocritus upon my

hands; but the Greek gentleman shall quickly be despatched, because I have more business with the Roman.

That which distinguishes Theocritus from all other Poets, both Greek and Latin, and which raises him even above Virgil in his Eclogues, is the inimitable tenderness of his passions, and the natural expression of them in words so becoming of a pastoral. A simplicity shines through all he writes: he shows his art and learning by disguising both. His shepherds never rise above their country education in their complaints of love. There is the same difference betwixt him and Virgil, as there is betwixt Tasso's Aminta and the Pastor Fido of Guarini. Virgil's shepherds are too well read in the Philosophy of Epicurus and of Plato; and Guarini's seem to have been bred in courts: but Theocritus and Tasso have taken theirs from cottages and plains. It was said of Tasso, in relation to his similitudes, *mai esce del bosco*; that he never departed from the woods, that is, all his comparisons were taken from the country. The same may be said of our Theocritus. He is softer than Ovid: he touches the passions more delicately, and performs all this out of his own fund, without diving into the arts and sciences for a supply. Even his Doric dialect has an incomparable sweetness in its clownishness, like a fair shepherdess in her country russet, talking in a Yorkshire tone. This was impossible for Virgil to imitate; because the severity of the Roman language denied him that advantage. Spenser has endeavoured it in his "Shepherd's Kalendar," but neither will it succeed in English; for which reason I forbore to attempt it. For Theocritus writ to Sicilians, who spoke that dialect; and I direct this part of my translations to our ladies, who neither understand nor will take pleasure in such homely expressions.

I proceed to Horace. Take him in parts, and he is chiefly to be considered in his three different talents as he was a Critic, a Satirist, and a Writer of Odes. His morals are uniform, and run through all of them: for let his Dutch commentators say what they will, his philosophy was Epicurean; and he made use of gods and providence, only to serve a turn in Poetry. But since neither his Criticisms, which are the most instructive of any that are written in this art, nor his Satires, which are incomparably beyond Juvenal's (if to laugh and rally is to be preferred to railing and declaiming), are no part of my present undertaking, I confine myself wholly to his Odes. These are also of several sorts: some of them are panegyrical, others moral, the rest jovial, or (if I may so call them) Bacchanalian. As difficult as he makes it, and as indeed it is, to imitate Pindar, yet, in his most elevated flights, and in the sudden changes of his subject with almost imperceptible connections, that Theban Poet is his master. But Horace is of the more bounded fancy, and confines himself strictly to one sort of verse, or stanza, in every Ode. That which will distinguish his style from all other Poets, is the elegance of his words, and the numerousness of his verse. There is nothing so delicately turned in all the Roman language. There appears in every part of his diction, or, to speak English, in all his expressions, a kind of noble and bold purity. His words are chosen with as much exactness as Virgil's; but there seems to be a greater spirit in them. There is a secret happiness attends his choice, which in Petronius is called *Curiosa Felicitas*, and which I suppose he had from the *felicitas audere* of Horace himself. But the most distinguishing part of all his character seems to me to be, his briskness, his jollity, and his good humour; and those I have chiefly endeavoured to copy. His other excellencies, I confess, are above my imitation. One Ode, which infinitely pleased me in the reading, I have attempted to translate in Pindaric Verse: it is that, which is inscribed to the present Earl of Rochester, to whom I have particular obligations, which this small testimony of my gratitude can never pay. It is his darling in the Latin, and I

have taken some pains to make it my masterpiece in English : for which reason I took this kind of verse, which allows more latitude than any other, Every one knows it was introduced into our language, in this age, by the happy genius of Mr. Cowley. The seeming easiness of it has made it spread ; but it has not been considered enough, to be so well cultivated. It languishes in almost every hand but his, and some very few, whom, to keep the rest in countenance, I do not name. He, indeed, has brought it as near perfection as was possible in so short a time. But if I may be allowed to speak my mind modestly, and without injury to his sacred ashes, somewhat of the purity of the English, somewhat of more equal thoughts, somewhat of sweetness in the numbers, in one word, somewhat of a finer turn, and more Lyrical Verse, is yet wanting. As for the soul of it, which consists in the warmth and vigour of fancy, the masterly figures, and the copiousness of imagination, he has excelled all others in this kind. Yet, if the kind itself be capable of more perfection, though rather in the ornamental parts of it than the essential, what rules of morality or respect have I broken, in naming the defects, that they may hereafter be amended ? Imitation is a nice point, and there are few Poets who deserve to be models in all they write. Milton's "Paradise Lost" is admirable ; but am I therefore bound to maintain, that there are no flats amongst his elevations, when 'tis evident he creeps along sometimes, for above a hundred lines together ? Cannot I admire the height of his invention, and the strength of his expression, without defending his antiquated words, and the perpetual harshness of their sound ? It is as much commendation as a man can bear, to own him excellent ; all beyond it is idolatry.

Since Pindar was the prince of Lyric Poets, let me have leave to say, that, in imitating him, our numbers should, for the most part, be Lyrical. For variety, or rather where the majesty of thought requires it, they may be stretched to the English Heroic of five feet, and to the French Alexandrine of six. But the ear must preside, and direct the judgment to the choice of numbers. Without the nicety of this, the harmony of Pindaric Verse can never be complete : the cadency of one line must be a rule to that of the next ; and the sound of the former must slide gently into that which follows ; without leaping from one extreme into another. It must be done like the shadowings of a picture, which fall by degrees into a darker colour. I shall be glad, if I have so explained myself as to be understood ; but if I have not, *quod nequeo dicere, et sentio tantum*, must be my excuse.

There remains much more to be said on this subject ; but, to avoid envy, I will be silent. What I have said is the general opinion of the best judges, and in a manner has been forced from me, by seeing a noble sort of Poetry so happily restored by one man, and so grossly copied by almost all the rest. A musical ear, and a great genius, if another Mr. Cowley could arise, in another age may bring it to perfection. In the meantime—

"Fungar vice cotis, acutum
Reddere quæ ferrum valet, exors ipsa secandi."

I hope it will not be expected from me that I should say anything of my fellow undertakers in this Miscellany. Some of them are too nearly related to me, to be commended without suspicion of partiality ; others, I am sure, need it not ; and the rest I have not perused.

To conclude, I am sensible that I have written this too hastily and too loosely : I fear I have been tedious, and which is worse, it comes out from the first draught, and

uncorrected. This I grant is no excuse ; for it may be reasonably urged, why he did not write with more leisure, or, if he had it not (which was certainly my case) why did he attempt to write on so nice a subject? The objection is unanswerable ; but, in part of recompense, let me assure the reader, that, in hasty productions, he is sure to meet with an author's present sense, which cooler thoughts would possibly have disguised. There is undoubtedly more of spirit, though not of judgment, in these uncorrect Essays, and consequently, though my hazard be the greater, yet the reader's pleasure is not the less.

JOHN DRYDEN.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THEOCRITUS.

AMARYLLIS :

OR THE THIRD IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS, PARAPHRASED.

To Amaryllis love compels my way,
My browsing goats upon the mountains
stray :
O Tityrus, tend them well, and see them fed
In pastures fresh, and to their watering led ;
And 'ware the ridgling with his budding
head.
Ah, beauteous nymph ! can you forget your
love,
The conscious grottos, and the shady grove ;
Where stretched at ease your tender limbs
were laid,
Your nameless beauties carelessly displayed ?
Then I was called your darling, your
desire, 10
With kisses such as set my soul on fire :
But you are changed, yet I am still the
same ;
My heart maintains for both a double flame :
Grieved, but unmoved, and patient of your
scorn :
So faithful I, and you so much forsworn !
I die, and death will finish all my pain ;
Yet, ere I die, behold me once again :
Am I so much deformed, so changed of
late ?
What partial judges are our love and hate !
Ten wildings have I gathered for my dear ; 20
How ruddy like your lips their streaks ap-
pear !
Far-off you viewed them with a longing eye
Upon the topmost branch (the tree was
high) :

Yet nimbly up, from bough to bough I
swerved,
And for to-morrow have ten more reserved.
Look on me kindly, and some pity show,
Or give me leave at least to look on you.
Some god transform me by his heavenly
power
Even to a bee to buzz within your bower,
The winding ivy-chaplet to invade, 30
And folded fern, that your fair forehead
shade.
Now to my cost the force of love I find ;
The heavy hand it bears on human kind.
The milk of tigers was his infant food,
Taught from his tender years the taste of
blood ;
His brother whelps and he ran wild about
the wood.
Ah nymph, trained up in his tyrannic
court,
To make the sufferings of your slaves your
sport !
Unheeded ruin ! treacherous delight !
Oh polished hardness, softened to the
sight ! 40
Whose radiant eyes your ebon brows adorn,
Like midnight those, and these like break
of morn !
Smile once again, revive me with your
charms ;
And let me die contented in your arms.
I would not ask to live another day,
Might I but sweetly kiss my soul away.
Ah, why am I from empty joys debarred ?
For kisses are but empty when compared.
I rave, and in my raging fit shall tear
The garland, which I wove for you to wear, 50

Of parsley, with a wreath of ivy bound,
And bordered with a rosy edging round.
What pangs I feel, unpitied and unheard !
Since I must die, why is my fate deferred !
I strip my body of my shepherd's frock :
Behold that dreadful downfall of a rock,
Where yon old fisher views the waves from
high !

'Tis that convenient-leap I mean to try.
You would be pleased to see me plunge to
shore,

But better pleased if I should rise no more. 60
I might have read my fortune long ago,
When, seeking my success in love to know,
I tried the infallible prophetic way,
A poppy-leaf upon my palm to lay :
I struck, and yet no lucky crack did follow ;
Yet I struck hard, and yet the leaf lay
hollow :

And, which was worse, if any worse could
prove,
The withering leaf foreshowed your wither-
ing love.

Yet farther (ah, how far a lover dares !)
My last recourse I had to sieve and
shears ; 70

And told the witch Agreo my disease :
(Agreo, that in harvest used to lease :
But harvest done, to chare-work did aspire ;
Meat, drink, and twopence was her daily
hire,)

To work she went, her charms she muttered
o'er,
And yet the resty sieve wagged ne'er the
more ;

I wept for woe, the testy beldame swore,
And, foaming with her god, foretold my fate ;
That I was doomed to love, and you to
hate.

A milk-white goat for you I did provide ; 80
Two milk-white kids run frisking by her
side,

For which the nut-brown lass, Erithacis,
Full often offered many a savoury kiss.
Hers they shall be, since you refuse the
price ;

What madman would o'erstand his market
twice !

My right eye itches, some good luck is
near,

Perhaps my Amarylhis may appear ;
I'll set up such a note as she shall hear.
What nymph but my melodious voice would
move ?

She must be flint, if she refuse my love. 90
Hippomenes, who ran with noble strife
To win his lady,* or to lose his life,
(What shift some men will make to get a
wife !)

Threw down a golden apple in her way ;
For all her haste she could not choose but
stay :

Renown said, Run ; the glittering bribe
cried, Hold ;
The man might have been hanged, but for
his gold.

Yet some suppose 'twas love (some few in-
deed)

That stopped the fatal fury of her speed :
She saw, she sighed ; her nimble feet re-
fuse 100

Their wonted speed, and she took pains to
lose.

A Prophet some, and some a Poet cry,
(No matter which, so neither of them lie),
From steepy Othrys' top to Pylus drove
His herd ; and for his pains enjoyed his
love :

If such another wager should be laid,
I'll find the man, if you can find the maid.
Why name I men, when Love extended
finds

His power on high, and in celestial minds ?
Venus the shepherd's homely habit took, 110
And managed something else besides the
crook ;

Nay, when Adonis died, was heard to roar,
And never from her heart forgave the boar.
How blest was fair Endymion with his
moon,

Who sleeps on Latmos' top from night to
noon !

* Atalanta, who ran races with her lovers ;
promising to marry the one who should beat her in
swiftness. If she won the race, her opponent
was put to death.

What Jason from Medea's love possessed,
You shall not hear, but know 'tis like the
rest.

My aching head can scarce support the
pain ;

This cursed love will surely turn my brain :
Feel how it shoots, and yet you take no
pity ; 120

Nay then 'tis time to end my doleful ditty.
A clammy sweat does o'er my temples
creep ;

My heavy eyes are urged with iron sleep ;
I lay me down to gasp my latest breath,
The wolves will get a breakfast by my
death ;

Yet scarce enough their hunger to supply,
For love has made me carrion ere I die.

THE EPITHALAMIUM OF HELEN AND MENELAUS.

FROM THE EIGHTEENTH IDYLLIUM OF
THEOCRITUS.

TWELVE Spartan virgins, noble, young, and
fair,

With violet wreaths adorned their flowing
hair ;

And to the pompous palace did resort,
Where Menelaus kept his royal court.

There hand in hand a comely choir they
led ;

To find a blessing to his nuptial bed,
With curious needles wrought, and painted
flowers bespread.

Jove's beauteous daughter now his bride
must be,

And Jove himself was less a god than he :
For this their artful hands instruct the lute
to sound, 10

Their feet assist their hands, and justly beat
the ground.

This was their song : " Why, happy bride-
groom, why,

Ere yet the stars are kindled in the sky,

Ere twilight shades, or evening dews are
shed,

Why dost thou steal so soon away to bed?
Has Somnus brushed thy eyelids with his
rod,

Or do thy legs refuse to bear their load,
With flowing bowls of a more generous
god?

If gentle slumber on thy temples creep,
(But, naughty man, thou dost not mean to
sleep), 20

Betake thee to thy bed, thou drowsy drone,
Sleep by thyself, and leave thy bride alone :
Go, leave her with her maiden mates to
play

At sports more harmless till the break of
day :

Give us this evening ; thou hast morn and
night,

And all the year before thee, for delight.

Oh, happy youth ! to thee, among the crowd
Of rival princes, Cupid sneezed aloud ;

And every lucky omen sent before,
To meet thee landing on the Spartan
shore. 30

Of all our heroes thou canst boast alone,
That Jove, when'er he thunders, calls thee
son :

Betwixt two sheets thou shalt enjoy her
bare,

With whom no Grecian virgin can compare ;
So soft, so sweet, so balmy and so fair,

A boy, like thee, would make a kingly line :
But oh, a girl like her must be divine.

Her equals, we, in years, but not in face,
Twelve score viragos of the Spartan race,
While naked to Eurotas' banks we bend, 40
And there in manly exercise contend,

When she appears, are all eclipsed and lost
And hide the beauties that we made our
boast.

So, when the night and winter disappear,
The purple morning, rising with the year,

Salutes the spring, as her celestial eyes
Adorn the world, and brighten all the skies :

So beauteous Helen shines among the rest,
Tall, slender, straight, with all the Graces
blest,

As pines the mountains, or as fields the
corn, 50

Or as Thessalian steeds the race adorn ;

So rosy-coloured Helen is the pride

Of Lacedæmon, and of Greece beside.

Like her no nymph can willing osiers bend

In basket-works, which painted streaks

commend :

With Pallas in the loom she may contend.

But none, ah ! none can animate the lyre,

And the mute strings with vocal souls in-
spire :

Whether the learned Minerva be her theme,

Or chaste Diana bathing in the stream ; 60

None can record their heavenly praise so

well

As Helen, in whose eyes ten thousand

Cupids dwell.

Oh, fair ! oh, graceful ! yet with maids en-
rolled,

But whom to-morrow's sun a matron shall

behold !

Yet ere to-morrow's sun shall show his head,

The dewy paths of meadows we will tread,

For crowns and chaplets to adorn thy head.

Where all shall weep, and wish for thy

return,

As bleating lambs their absent mother

mourn.

Our noblest maids shall to thy name be-
queath 70

The boughs of Lotos, formed into a wreath.

This monument, thy maiden beauties' due,

High on a plane-tree shall be hung to view :

On the smooth rind the passenger shall see

Thy name engraved, and worship Helen's

tree ;

Balm, from a silver box distilled around,

Shall all bedew the roots, and scent the

sacred ground.

The balm, 'tis true, can aged plants prolong :

But Helen's name will keep it ever young.

Hail bride, hail bridegroom, son-in-law to

Jove ! 80

With fruitful joys Latona bless your love !

Let Venus furnish you with full desires,

Add vigour to your wills, and fuel to your

fires !

Almighty Jove augment your wealthy store,

Give much to you, and to his grandsons

more !

From generous loins a generous race will

spring,

Each girl, like her, a queen ; each boy, like

you, a king.

Now sleep, if sleep you can ; but while you

rest,

Sleep close, with folded arms, and breast

to breast :

Rise in the morn ; but oh ! before you

rise, 90

Forget not to perform your morning sacri-
fice.

We will be with you ere the crowing cock

Salutes the light, and struts before his

feathered flock.

Hymen, O Hymen, to thy triumphs run,

And view the mighty spoils thou hast in

battle won.

THE DESPAIRING LOVER.

FROM THE TWENTY-THIRD IDYLLIUM OF
THEOCRITUS.

WITH inauspicious love, a wretched swain

Pursued the fairest nymph of all the plain ;

Fairest indeed, but prouder far than fair,

She plunged him hopeless in a deep

despair :

Her heavenly form too haughtily she

prized,

His person hated, and his gifts despised ;

Nor knew the force of Cupid's cruel darts,

Nor feared his awful power on human

hearts ;

But either from her hopeless lover fled,

Or with disdainful glances shot him

dead. 10

No kiss, no look, to cheer the drooping

boy ;

No word she spoke, she scorned even to

deny.

But, as a hunted panther casts about
 Her glaring eyes, and pricks her listening
 ears to scout,
 So she, to shun his toils, her cares employed,
 And fiercely in her savage freedom joyed.
 Her mouth she writhed, her forehead
 taught to frown,
 Her eyes to sparkle fires to love unknown;
 Her sallow cheeks her envious mind did
 show,
 And every feature spoke aloud the curstness
 of a shrew. 20
 Yet could not he his obvious fate escape;
 His love still dressed her in a pleasing
 shape;
 And every sullen frown, and bitter scorn,
 But fanned the fuel that too fast did burn.
 Long time, unequal to his mighty pain,
 He strove to curb it, but he strove in vain:
 At last his woes broke out, and begged
 relief
 With tears, the dumb petitioners of grief:
 With tears so tender, as adorned his love,
 And any heart, but only hers, would
 move. 30
 Trembling before her bolted doors he
 stood,
 And there poured out the unprofitable
 flood:
 Staring his eyes, and haggard was his
 look;
 Then, kissing first the threshold, thus he
 spoke.
 " Ah nymph, more cruel than of human
 race!
 Thy tigress heart belies thy angel face:
 Too well thou show'st thy pedigree from
 stone:
 Thy grandame's was the first by Pyrrha
 thrown:
 Unworthy thou to be so long desired;
 But so my love, and so my fate required. 40
 I beg not now (for 'tis in vain) to live;
 But take this gift, the last that I can give.
 This friendly cord shall soon decide the
 strife
 Betwixt my lingering love and loathsome
 life:

This moment puts an end to all my pain;
 I shall no more despair, nor thot disdain.
 Farewell, ungrateful and unkind! I go
 Condemned by thee to those sad shades
 below.
 I go the extremest remedy to prove,
 To drink oblivion, and to drench my
 love: 50
 There happily to lose my long desires:
 But ah! what draught so deep to quench
 my fires?
 Farewell, ye never-opening gates, ye stones,
 And threshold guilty of my midnight
 moans!
 What I have suffered here you know too
 well;
 What I shall do the gods and I can tell.
 The rose is fragrant, but it fades in time;
 The violet sweet, but quickly past the
 prime;
 White lilies hang their heads, and soon
 decay,
 And whiter snow in minutes melts away: 60
 Such is your blooming youth, and wither-
 ing so:
 The time will come, it will, when you shall
 know
 The rage of love; your haughty heart
 shall burn
 In flames like mine, and meet a like
 return.
 Obdurate as you are, oh! hear at least
 My dying prayers, and grant my last
 request.
 When first you ope your doors, and, passing
 by,
 The sad ill-omened object meets your eye,
 Think it not lost, a moment if you stay;
 The breathless wretch, so made by you,
 survey: 70
 Some cruel pleasure will from thence arise,
 To view the mighty ravage of your eyes.
 I wish (but oh! my wish is vain, I fear)
 The kind oblation of a falling tear:
 Then loose the knot, and take me from the
 place,
 And spread your mantle o'er my grisly
 face;

Upon my livid lips bestow a kiss :
 Oh, envy not the dead, they feel not bliss !
 Nor fear your kisses can restore my breath ;
 E'en you are not more pitiless than
 death. 80
 Then for my corpse a homely grave provide,
 Which love and me from public scorn may
 hide.
 Thrice call upon my name, thrice beat your
 breast,
 And hail me thrice to everlasting rest :
 Last let my tomb this sad inscription bear :
 " A wretch whom love has killed lies
 buried here ;
 O passengers, Aminta's eyes beware." 90
 Thus having said, and furious with his love,
 He heaved with more than human force to
 move
 A weighty stone (the labour of a team) 90
 And raised from thence he reached the
 neighbouring beam :
 Around its bulk a sliding knot he throws,
 And fitted to his neck the fatal noose :
 Then spurning backward, took a swing,
 till death
 Crept up, and stopped the passage of his
 breath.

The bounce burst ope the dear ; the scornful
 fair
 Relentless looked, and saw him beat his
 quivering feet in air ;
 Nor wept his fate, nor cast a pitying eye,
 Nor took him down, but brushed regardless
 by :
 And, as she passed, her chance of fate was
 such, 100
 Her garments touched the dead, polluted
 by the touch :
 Next to the dance, thence to the bath did
 move ;
 The bath was sacred to the god of Love ;
 Whose injured image, with a wrathful eye,
 Stood threatening from a pedestal on
 high :
 Nodding awhile, and watchful of his blow,
 He fell ; and falling crushed the ungrateful
 nymph below ;
 Her gushing blood the pavement all be-
 smeared ;
 And this her last expiring voice was heard ;
 " Lovers, farewell ! revenge has reached my
 scorn ; 110
 Thus warned, be wise, and love for love
 return."

TRANSLATIONS FROM LUCRETII.

THE BEGINNING OF THE FIRST BOOK OF LUCRETII.

DELIGHT of human kind, and gods above,
 Parent of Rome, propitious Queen of Love,
 Whose vital power, air, earth, and sea
 supplies,
 And breeds what'er is born beneath the
 rolling skies ;
 For every kind, by thy prolific might,
 Springs, and beholds, the regions of the
 light.

Thee, goddess, thee the clouds and tempests
 fear,
 And at thy pleasing presence disappear :
 For thee the land in fragrant flowers is
 dressed ;
 For thee the ocean smiles, and smooths her
 wavy breast ; 10
 And heaven itself with more serene and
 purer light is blessed.
 For when the rising spring adorns the
 mead,
 And a new scene of nature stands displayed,

When teeming buds, and cheerful greens
appear,

And western gales unlock the lazy year :
The joyous birds thy welcome first express,
Whose native songs thy genial fire confess ;
Then savage beasts bound o'er their slighted
food,

Struck with thy darts, and tempt the raging
flood.

All nature is thy gift ; earth, air, and sea : 20
Of all that breathes, the various progeny,
Stung with delight, is goaded on by thee.
O'er barren mountains, o'er the flowery
plain,

The leafy forest, and the liquid main,
Extends thy uncontrolled and boundless
reign.

Through all the living regions dost thou move,
And scatterest, where thou goest, the kindly
seeds of love.

Since then the race of every living thing
Obeys thy power ; since nothing new can
spring

Without thy warmth, without thy influence
bear, 30

Or beautiful, or lovesome can appear ;
Be thou my aid, my tuneful song inspire,
And kindle with thy own productive fire ;
While all thy province, Nature, I survey,
And sing to Memmius an immortal lay
Of heaven and earth, and everywhere thy
wondrous power display :

To Memmius under thy sweet influence
born,

Whom thou with all thy gifts and graces
dost adorn.

The rather then assist my Muse and me,
Infusing verses worthy him and thee. 40
Meantime on land and sea let barbarous
discord cease,

And lull the listening world in universal
peace.

To thee mankind their soft repose must owe,
For thou alone that blessing canst bestow ;
Because the brutal business of the war
Is managed by thy dreadful servant's * care ;

Who oft retires from fighting fields, to prove
The pleasing pains of thy eternal love ;

And, panting on thy breast, supinely lies,
While with thy heavenly form he feeds his
famished eyes ; 50

Sucks in with open lips thy balmy breath,
By turns restored to life, and plunged in
pleasing death.

There while thy curling limbs about him
move,

Involved and fettered in the links of love,
When, wishing all, he nothing can deny,
Thy charms in that auspicious moment try ;
With winning eloquence our peace implore,
And quiet to the weary world restore.

THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND BOOK OF LUCRETIIUS.

'Tis pleasant, safely to behold from ~~there~~
The rolling ship, and hear the tempest
roar :

Not that another's pain is our delight ;
But pains unfelt produce the pleasing sight.

'Tis pleasant also to behold from far
The moving legions mingled in the war.
But much more sweet thy labouring steps
to guide

To virtue's heights, with wisdom well
supplied,

And all the magazines of learning fortified :
From thence to look below on human
kind, 10

Bewildered in the maze of life, and blind :
To see vain fools ambitiously contend
For wit and power ; their last endeavours
bend

To outshine each other, waste their time
and health

In search of honour, and pursuit of wealth.
Oh, wretched man ! in what a mist of life,
Enclosed with dangers and with noisy strife,
He spends his little span ; and overheda
His crammed desires, with more than
nature needs !

For nature wisely stints our appetite, 20
And craves no more than undisturbed
delight :

Which minds, unmixed with cares and
fears, obtain ;

A soul serene, a body void of pain.
So little this corporeal frame requires ;

So bounded are our natural desires,
That wanting all, and setting pain aside,
With bare privation sense is satisfied.

If golden sconces hang not on the walls,
To light the costly suppers and the balls ;
If the proud palace shines not with the
state 30

Of burnished bowls, and of reflected plate ;
If well-tuned harps, nor the more pleasing
sound

Of voices, from the vaulted roofs rebound ;
Yet on the grass, beneath a poplar shade,
By the cool stream our careless limbs are
laid ;

With cheaper pleasures innocently blessed,
When the warm spring with gaudy flowers
is dressed.

Nor will the raging fever's fire abate,
With golden canopies and beds of state :
But the poor patient will as soon be sound 40
On the hard mattress, or the mother
ground.

Then since our bodies are not eased the
more

By birth, or power, or fortune's wealthy
store,

'Tis plain, these useless toys of every kind
As little can relieve the labouring mind :
Unless we could suppose the dreadful
sight

Of marshalled legions moving to the fight,
Could, with their sound and terrible array,
Expel our fears, and drive the thoughts of
death away.

But, since the supposition vain appears, 50
Since clinging cares, and trains of inbred
fears,

Are not with sounds to be affrighted
thence,

But in the midst of pomp pursue the
prince,

Not awed by arms, but in the presence
bold,

Without respect to purple, or to gold ;
Why should not we these pageantries
despise ;

Whose worth but in our want of reason
lies ?

For life is all in wandering errors led ;
And just as children are surprised with
dread,

And tremble in the dark, so riper years 60
E'en in broad daylight are possessed with
fears ;

And shake at shadows fanciful and vain,
As those which in the breasts of children
reign.

These bugbears of the mind, this inward
hell,

No rays of outward sunshine can dispel ;
But nature and right reason must display
Their beams abroad, and bring the dark-
some soul to day.

THE LATTER PART OF THE THIRD BOOK OF LUCRETIUS.

AGAINST THE FEAR OF DEATH.

WHAT has this bugbear death to frighten
man,

If souls can die, as well as bodies can ?
For, as before our birth we felt no pain,
When Punic arms infested land and main,
When heaven and earth were in confusion
hurled,

For the debated empire of the world,
Which awed with dreadful expectation lay,
Sure to be slaves, uncertain who should
sway :

So, when our mortal frame shall be dis-
joined, 10

The lifeless lump uncoupled from the mind,
From sense of grief and pain we shall be
free ;

We shall not *feel*, because we shall not *be*.

Inspiring secret pleasure through thy
 breast ; 80
 Ah ! these shall be no more : thy friends
 oppressed
 Thy care and courage now no more shall
 free ;
 Ah ! wretch, thou criest, ah ! miserable
 me !
 One woful day sweeps children, friends,
 and wife,
 And all the brittle blessings of my life !
 Add one thing more, and all thou sayest is
 true ;
 Thy want and wish of them is vanished too :
 Which, well considered, were a quick
 relief
 To all thy vain imaginary grief.
 For thou shalt sleep, and never wake
 again, 90
 And, quitting life, shalt quit thy living
 pain.
 But we, thy friends, shall all those sorrows
 find,
 Which in forgetful death thou leav'st
 behind ;
 No time shall dry our tears, nor drive thee
 from our mind.
 The worst that can befall thee, measured
 right,
 Is a sound slumber, and a long good night.
 Yet thus the fools, that would be thought
 the wits,
 Disturb their mirth with melancholy fits :
 When healths go round, and kindly
 brimmers flow,
 Till the fresh garlands on their foreheads
 glow, 100
 They whine, and cry, " Let us make haste
 to live,
 Short are the joys that human life can
 give."
 Eternal preachers, that corrupt the draught,
 And pall the god, that never thinks, with
 thought ;
 Idiots with all that thought, to whom the
 worst
 Of death, is want of drink, and endless
 thirst,
 Or any fond desire as vain as these.
 For, even in sleep, the body, wrapt in
 ease,
 Supinely lies, as in the peaceful grave ;
 And, wanting nothing, nothing can it
 crave. 110
 Were that sound sleep eternal, it were
 death ;
 Yet the first atoms then, the seeds of breath,
 Are moving near to sense ; we do but
 shake
 And rouse that sense, and straight we are
 awake.
 Then death to us, and death's anxiety,
 Is less than nothing, if a less could be.
 For then our atoms, which in order lay,
 Are scattered from their heap, and puffed
 away,
 And never can return into their place,
 When once the pause of life has left an empty
 space. 120
 And last, suppose great Nature's voice
 should call
 To thee, or me, or any of us all,
 " What dost thou mean, ungrateful wretch,
 thou vain,
 Thou mortal thing, thus idly to complain,
 And sigh and sob, that thou shalt be no
 more?
 For if thy life were pleasant heretofore,
 If all the bounteous blessings, I could give,
 Thou hast enjoyed, if thou hast known to
 live,
 And pleasure not leaked through thee like a
 sieve ;
 Why dost thou not give thanks, as at a
 plenteous feast, 130
 Crammed to the throat with life, and rise
 and take thy rest?
 But if My blessings thou has thrown away,
 If indigested joys passed through, and
 would not stay,
 Why dost thou wish for more to squander
 still?
 If life be grown a load, a real ill,
 And I would all thy cares and labours end,
 Lay down thy burden, fool, and know thy
 friend.

To please thee, I have emptied all my
store,

I can invent, and can supply no more ;
But run the round again, the round I ran
before. 140

Suppose thou art not broken yet with years,
Yet still the self-same scene of things
appears,

And would be ever, couldst thou ever live :
For life is still but life, there's nothing new
to give."

What can we plead against so just a bill?
We stand convicted, and our cause goes
ill.

But if a wretch, a man oppressed by fate,
Should beg of Nature to prolong his date,
She speaks aloud to him with more disdain,
"Be still, thou martyr fool, thou covetous
of pain." 150

But if an old decrepit sot lament ;
"What thou" (she cries) "who hast out-
lived content !

Dost thou complain, who hast enjoyed my
store ?

But this is still the effect of wishing more.
Unsatisfied with all that Nature brings ;
Loathing the present, liking absent things ;
From hence it comes, thy vain desires, at
strife

Within themselves, have tantalised thy
life,

And ghastly death appeared before thy
sight,

Ere thou hast gorged thy soul and senses
with delight. 160

Now leave those joys, unsuiting to thy age,
To a fresh comer, and resign the stage."

Is Nature to be blamed if thus she chide ?
No sure ; for 'tis her business to provide
Against this ever-changing frame's decay,
New things to come, and old to pass away.
One being, worn, another being makes ;
Changed, but not lost ; for Nature gives
and takes :

New matter must be found for things to
come,

And these must waste like those, and follow
Nature's doom. 170

All things, like thee, have time to rise and rot ;
And from each other's ruin are begot ;
For life is not confined to him or thee :
'Tis given to all for use, to none for pro-
perty.

Consider former ages past and gone,
Whose circles ended long ere thine begun,
Then tell me, fool, what part in them thou
hast ?

Thus mayest thou judge the future by the
past.

What horror seest thou in that quiet state,
What bugbear dreams to fright thee after
fate? 180

No ghost, no goblins, that still passage
keep ;

But all is there serene, in that eternal
sleep.

For all the dismal tales, that Poets tell,
Are verified on earth, and not in hell.
No Tantalus looks up with fearful eye,
Or dreads the impending rock to crush him
from on high :

But fear of chance on earth disturbs our
easy hours,
Or vain, imagined wrath of vain imagined
powers.

No Tityus torn by vultures lies in hell ;
Nor could the lobes of his rank liver swell 190
To that prodigious mass, for their eternal
meal :

Not though his monstrous bulk had covered
o'er

Nine spreading acres, or nine thousand
more ;

Not though the globe of earth had been the
giant's floor.

Nor in eternal torments could he lie ;
Nor could his corpse sufficient food supply.
But he's the Tityus, who by love oppressed,
Or tyrant passion preying on his breast,
And ever anxious thoughts, is robbed of
rest.

The Sisypheus is he, whom noise and
strife 200

Seduce from all the soft retreats of life,
To vex the government, disturb the laws :
Drunk with the fumes of popular applause

He courts the giddy crowd to make him
great,
And sweats and toils in vain, to mount the
sovereign seat.
For still to aim at power, and still to fail,
Ever to strive, and never to prevail,
What is it, but, in reason's true account,
To heave the stone against the rising
mount?
Which urged, and laboured, and forced up
with pain, 210
Recoils, and rolls impetuous down, and
smokes along the plain.
Then still to treat thy ever craving mind
With every blessing, and of every kind,
Yet never fill thy ravening appetite;
Though years and seasons vary thy delight,
Yet nothing to be seen of all the store,
But still the wolf within thee barks for
more;
This is the fable's moral, which they tell
Of fifty foolish virgins* damned in hell
To leaky vessels, which the liquor spill; 220
To vessels of their sex, which none could
ever fill.
As for the Dog, the Furies, and their
snakes,
The gloomy caverns, and the burning
lakes,
And all the vain infernal trumpery,
They neither are, nor were, nor e'er can be.
But here on earth the guilty have in view
The mighty pains to mighty mischiefs due;
Racks, prisons, poisons, the Tarpeian rock,
Stripes, hangmen, pitch, and suffocating
smoke;
And last, and most, if these were cast
behind, 230
The avenging horror of a conscious mind,
Whose deadly fear anticipates the blow,
And sees no end of punishment and woe;
But looks for more, at the last gasp of
breath:
This makes a hell on earth, and life a
death.

Meantime when thoughts of death disturb
thy head;
Consider, Ancus, great and good, is dead;
Ancus, thy better far, was born to die;
And thou, dost thou bewail mortality?
So many monarchs, with their mighty
state, 240
Who ruled the world, were over-ruled by
fate.
That haughty king,† who lorded o'er the
main,
And whose stupendous bridge did the wild
waves restrain,
(In vain they foamed, in vain they threatened
wrack,
While his proud legions marched upon their
back:)
Him Death, a greater monarch, overcame;
Nor spared his guards the more, for their
immortal name.
The Roman chief, the Carthaginian dread,
Scipio the thunderbolt of war, is dead,
And, like a common slave, by Fate in
triumph led. 250
The founders of invented arts are lost;
And wits, who made eternity their boast.
Where now is Homer, who possessed the
throne?
The immortal work remains, the immortal
author's gone.
Democritus, perceiving age invade
His body weakened, and his mind decayed,
Obeyed the summons with a cheerful face;
Made haste to welcome death, and met him
half the race.
That stroke even Epicurus could not bar,
Though he in wit surpassed mankind, as
far 260
As does the midday sun the midnight
star.
And thou, dost thou disdain to yield thy
breath,
Whose very life is little more than death?
More than one half by lazy sleep possessed;
And when awake, thy soul but nods at best,

* The Danaïdes.

† Xerxes.

Day-dreams and sickly thoughts revolving
in thy breast.

Eternal troubles haunt thy anxious mind,
Whose cause and cure thou never hopest to
find ;

But still uncertain, with thyself at strife.
Thou wanderest in the labyrinth of life. 270
Oh, if the foolish race of man, who find
A weight of cares still pressing on their
mind,

Could find as well the cause of this unrest,
And all this burden lodged within the breast ;
Sure they would change their course, nor
live as now,

Uncertain what to wish, or what to vow.
Uneasy both in country and in town,
They search a place to lay their burden
down.

One, restless in his palace, walks abroad,
And vainly thinks to leave behind the
load : 280

But straight returns ; for he's as restless there ;
And finds there's no relief in open air.
Another to his villa would retire,
And spurs as hard as if it were on fire ;
No sooner entered at his country door,
But he begins to stretch, and yawn, and
snore ;

Or seeks the city which he left before.
Thus every man o'erworks his weary will,
To shun himself, and to shake off his ill ;
The shaking fit returns, and hangs upon
him still. 290

No prospect of repose, nor hope of ease ;
The wretch is ignorant of his disease ;
Which known would all his fruitless trouble
spare ;

For he would know the world not worth his
care ;

Then would he search more deeply for the
cause,

And study Nature well, and Nature's laws ;
For in this moment lies not the debate,
But on our future, fixed, eternal state ;

That never-changing state, which all must
keep,

Whom death has doomed to everlasting
sleep. 300

Why are we then so fond of mortal life,
Beset with dangers, and maintained with
strife ?

A life, which all our care can never save ;
One fate attends us, and one common
grave.

Besides, we tread but a perpetual round ;
We ne'er strike out, but beat the former
ground,

And the same mawkish joys in the same
track are found.

For still we think an absent blessing best,
Which cloy, and is no blessing when
possessed ;

A new arising wish expels it from the
breast. 310

The feverish thirst of life increases still ;
We call for more and more, and never have
our fill ;

Yet know not what to-morrow we shall try,
What dregs of life in the last draught may
lie :

Nor, by the longest life we can attain,
One moment from the length of death we
gain ;

For all behind belongs to his eternal reign.
When once the Fates have cut the mortal
thread,

The man as much to all intents is dead,
Who dies to-day, and will as long be so, 320
As he who died a thousand years ago.

FROM THE

FIFTH BOOK OF LUCRETII.

TUM PORRÒ PUER, ETC.

THUS, like a sailor by a tempest hurled
Ashore, the babe is shipwrecked on the
world :

Naked he lies, and ready to expire :
Helpless of all that human wants require ;
Exposed upon unhospitable earth,
From the first moment of his hapless birth.

Straight with foreboding cries he fills the room ;
 Too true presages of his future doom.
 But flocks and herds, and every savage beast,
 By more indulgent Nature are increased. 10
 They want no rattles for their froward mood,
 Nor nurse to reconcile them to their food

With broken words ; nor winter blasts they fear,
 Nor change their habits with the changing year :
 Nor, for their safety, citadels prepare,
 Nor forge the wicked instruments of war :
 Unlaboured Earth her bounteous treasure grants,
 And Nature's lavish hand supplies their common wants.

TRANSLATIONS FROM HORACE.

THE THIRD ODE OF THE
 FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

INSCRIBED TO THE EARL OF ROSCOMMON, ON HIS
 INTENDED VOYAGE TO IRELAND.

So may the auspicious Queen of Love,
 And the Twin Stars,* the seed of Jove,
 And he who rules the raging wind,†
 To thee, O sacred ship, be kind ;
 And gentle breezes fill thy sails,
 Supplying soft Etesian gales :
 As thou to whom the Muse commends
 The best of Poets, and of friends,‡
 Dost thy committed pledge restore
 And land him safely on the shore ; 10
 And save the better part of me,
 From perishing with him at sea.
 Sure he, who first the passage tried,
 In hardened oak his heart did hide,
 And ribs of iron armed his side ;
 Or his at least, in hollow wood
 Who tempted first the briny flood :

* Castor and Pollux, who were the deities most favourable to mariners. They were supposed to appear in the electric light often seen on the top of masts or on spears in the Mediterranean.

† Eolus.

‡ Virgil, to whose ship the ode is addressed.

Nor feared the winds' contending roar,
 Nor billows beating on the shore ;
 Nor Hyades portending rain ; 20
 Nor all the tyrants of the main.
 What form of death could him affright,
 Who unconcerned, with steadfast sight,
 Could view the surges mounting steep,
 And monsters rolling in the deep !
 Could through the ranks of ruin go,
 With storms above, and rocks below !
 In vain did Nature's wise command
 Divide the waters from the land,
 If daring ships and men profane 30
 Invade the inviolable main ;
 The eternal fences overleap,
 And pass at will the boundless deep.
 No toil, no hardship can restrain
 Ambitious man, injured to pain ;
 The more confined, the more he tries,
 And at forbidden quarry flies.
 Thus bold Prometheus did aspire,
 And stole from heaven the seeds of fire : 40
 A train of ills, a ghastly crew,
 The robber's blazing track pursue ;
 Fierce Famine with her meagre face,
 And Fevers of the fiery race,
 In swarms the offending wretch surround
 All brooding on the blasted ground :

And limping Death, lashed on by Fate,
Comes up to shorten half our date.
This made not Dædalus beware,
With borrowed wings to sail in air :
To hell Alcides forced his way, 50
Plunged through the lake, and snatched
the prey.
Nay, scarce the gods, or heavenly climes,
Are safe from our audacious crimes ;
We reach at Jove's imperial crown,
And pull the unwilling thunder down.

THE NINTH ODE OF THE
FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

I.

BEHOLD yon mountain's hoary height,
Made higher with new mounts of snow ;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the labouring woods below :
And streams, with icy fetters bound,
Benumbed and cramped to solid ground.

II.

With well-heaped logs dissolve the cold,
And feed the genial hearth with fires ;
Produce the wine, that makes us bold,
And sprightly wit and love inspires :
For what hereafter shall betide, 10
God, if 'tis worth His care, provide.

III.

Let Him alone, with what He made,
To toss and turn the world below ;
At His command the storms invade ;
The winds by His commission blow ;
Till with a nod He bids 'em cease,
And then the calm returns, and all is peace.

IV.

To-morrow and her works defy,
Lay hold upon the present hour, 20
And snatch the pleasures passing by,
To put them out of Fortune's power :
Nor love, nor love's delights disdain ;
Whate'er thou gett'st to-day, is gain.

V.

Secure those golden early joys,
That youth unsoured with sorrow bears,
Ere withering time the taste destroys,
With sickness and unwieldy years.
For active sports ; for pleasing rest,
This is the time to be possessed ; 30
The best is but in season best.

VI.

The appointed hour of promised bliss,
The pleasing whisper in the dark,
The half unwilling willing kiss,
The laugh that guides thee to the mark,
When the kind nymph would coyness feign,
And hides but to be found again ;
These, these are joys, the gods for youth
ordain.

THE TWENTY-NINTH ODE OF THE
FIRST* BOOK OF HORACE.

PARAPHRASED IN PINDARIC VERSE, AND IN-
SCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON. LAURENCE
EARL OF ROCHESTER.

I.

DESCENDED of an ancient line,
That long the Tuscan sceptre swayed,
Make haste to meet the generous wine,
Whose piercing is for thee delayed :
The rosy wreath is ready made ;
And artful hands prepare
The fragrant Syrian oil, that shall perfume
thy hair.

II.

When the wine sparkles from afar,
And the well-natured friend cries, Come
away ;
Make haste, and leave thy business and
thy care : 10
No mortal interest can be worth thy
stay.

* This should be Book III., not Book I. It
is addressed by Horace to Mæcenas.

III.

Leave for a while thy costly country seat ;
 And, to be great indeed, forget
 The nauseous pleasures of the great :
 Make haste and come :
 Come, and forsake thy cloying store ;
 Thy turret that surveys, from high,
 The smoke, and wealth, and noise of
 Rome ;
 And all the busy pageantry
 That wise men scorn, and fools adore : 20
 Come, give thy soul a loose, and taste the
 pleasures of the poor.

IV.

Sometimes 'tis grateful to the rich to try
 A short vicissitude, and fit of poverty :
 A savoury dish, a homely treat,
 Where all is plain, where all is neat,
 Without the stately spacious room,
 The Persian carpet, or the Tyrian loom,
 Clear up the cloudy foreheads of the great.

V.

The sun is in the Lion mounted high ;
 The Syrian star 80
 Barks from afar,
 And with his sultry breath infects the
 sky ;
 The ground below is parched, the heavens
 above us fry.
 The shepherd drives his fainting flock
 Beneath the covert of a rock,
 And seeks refreshing rivulets nigh ;
 The Sylvans to their shades retire,
 Those very shades and streams new shades
 and streams require,
 And want a cooling breeze of wind to fan
 the raging fire.

VI.

Thou, what befits the New Lord Mayor,
 And what the city factions dare, 40
 And what the Gallic arms will do,

And what the quiver-bearing foe,
 Art anxiously inquisitive to know :
 But God has, wisely, hid from human
 sight
 The dark decrees of future fate,
 And sown their seeds in depth of night ;
 He laughs at all the giddy turns of state ;
 When mortals search too soon, and fear
 too late.

VII.

Enjoy the present smiling hour ; 50
 And put it out of Fortune's power :
 The tide of business, like the running
 stream,
 Is sometimes high, and sometimes low,
 A quiet ebb, or a tempestuous flow,
 And always in extreme.
 Now with a noiseless gentle course
 It keeps within the middle bed ;
 Anon it lifts aloft the head,
 And bears down all before it with im-
 petuous force ;
 And trunks of trees come rolling
 down, 60
 Sheep and their folds together drown :
 Both house and homestead into seas are
 borne ;
 And rocks are from their old foundations
 torn,
 And woods, made thin with winds, their
 scattered honours mourn.

VIII.

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
 He, who can call to-day his own ;
 He who, secure within, can say,
 To-morrow do thy worst, for I have
 lived to-day.
 Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,
 The joys I have possessed, in spite of
 fate, are mine. 70
 Not Heaven itself upon the past has
 power ;
 But what has been, has been, and I have
 had my hour.

IX.

Fortune, that, with malicious joy,
 Does man her slave oppress,
 Proud of her office to destroy,
 Is seldom pleased to bless :
 Still various, and unconstant still,
 But with an inclination to be ill,
 Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
 And makes a lottery of life. 80
 I can enjoy her while she's kind ;
 But when she dances in the wind,
 And shakes the wings, and will not
 stay,
 I puff the prostitute away :
 The little or the much she gave, is quietly
 resigned :
 Content with poverty, my soul I arm ;
 And virtue, though in rags, will keep me
 warm.

X.

What is 't to me,
 Who never sail in her unfaithful sea,
 If storms arise, and clouds grow
 black ; 90
 If the mast split, and threaten wreck ?
 Then let the greedy merchant fear
 For his ill-gotten gain ;
 And pray to gods that will not hear,
 While the debating winds and billows bear
 His wealth into the main.
 For me, secure from Fortune's blows,
 Secure of what I cannot lose,
 In my small pinnacle I can sail,
 Contemning all the blustering roar : 100
 And running with a merry gale,
 With friendly stars my safety seek
 Within some little winding creek :
 And see the storm, ashore.

THE SECOND EPODE OF
HORACE.

How happy in his low degree,
 How rich in humble poverty, is he,
 Who leads a quiet country life ;
 Discharged of business, void of strife,
 And from the griping scrivener free !
 Thus, ere the seeds of vice were sown,
 Lived men in better ages born,
 Who ploughed, with oxen of their own,
 Their small paternal field of corn.
 Nor trumpets summon him to war, 10
 Nor drums disturb his morning sleep,
 Nor knows he merchants' gainful care,
 Nor fears the dangers of the deep.
 The clamours of contentious law,
 And court and state, he wisely shuns,
 Nor bribed with hopes, nor dared with awe,
 To servile salutations runs ;
 But either to the clasping vine
 Does the supporting poplar wed,
 Or with his pruning-hook disjoin 20
 Unbearing branches from their head,
 And grafts more happy in their stead :
 Or, climbing to a hilly steep,
 He views his herds in vales afar,
 Or shears his overburdened sheep,
 Or mead for cooling drink prepares,
 Of virgin honey in the jars.
 Or, in the now declining year,
 When bounteous Autumn rears his head,
 He joys to pull the ripened pear, 30
 And clustering grapes with purple spread.
 The fairest of his fruit he serves,
 Priapus, thy rewards :
 Sylvanus too his part deserves,
 Whose care the fences guards.
 Sometimes beneath an ancient oak,
 Or on the matted grass he lies :
 No god of Sleep he need invoke ; 40
 The stream, that o'er the pebbles flies,
 With gentle slumber crowns his eyes :
 The wind, that whistles through the sprays,
 Maintains the consort of the song ;
 And hidden birds, with native lays,
 The golden sleep prolong.

But when the blast of winter blows,
 And hoary frost inverts the year,
 Into the naked woods he goes,
 And seeks the tusky boar to rear,
 With well-mouthed hounds and pointed
 spear !
 Or spreads his subtle nets from sight, 50
 With twinkling glasses, to betray
 The larks that in the meshes light ;
 Or makes the fearful hare his prey.
 Amidst his harmless easy joys
 No anxious care invades his health,
 Nor love his peace of mind destroys,
 Nor wicked avarice of wealth.
 But if a chaste and pleasing wife,
 To ease the business of his life,
 Divides with him his household care, 60
 Such as the Sabine matrons were,
 Such as the swift Apulian's bride,
 Sun-burnt and swarthy though she be,
 Will fire for winter nights provide,
 And without noise will oversee
 His children and his family ;
 And order all things till he come,
 Sweaty and overlaboured, home ;
 If she in pens his flocks will fold,
 And then produce her dairy store, 70
 With wine to drive away the cold,
 And unbought dainties of the poor ;
 Not oysters of the Lucrine lake

My sober appetite would wish,
 Nor turbot, or the foreign fish
 That rolling tempests overtake,
 And hither waft the costly dish.
 Not heathpout, or the rarer bird,
 Which Phasis or Ionia yields,
 More pleasing morsels would afford 80
 Than the fat olives of my fields ;
 Than shards or mallows for the pot,
 That keep the loosened body sound,
 Or than the lamb, that falls by lot
 To the just guardian of my ground.
 Amidst these feasts of happy swains,
 The jolly shepherd smiles to see
 His flock returning from the plains ;
 The farmer is as pleased as he, 90
 To view his oxen sweating smoke,
 Bear on their necks the loosened yoke !
 To look upon his menial crew,
 That sit around his cheerful hearth,
 And bodies spent in toil renew
 With wholesome food and country
 mirth.
 This Morecraft said within himself,
 Resolved to leave the wicked town,
 And live retired upon his own ;
 He called his money in ; 70
 But the prevailing love of pelf,
 Soon split him on the former shelf 100
 He put it out again.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD RADCLIFFE.

MY LORD,

THESE Miscellany Poems are by many titles yours. The first they claim from your acceptance of my promise to present them to you, before some of them were yet in being. The rest are derived from your own merit, the exactness of your judgment in poetry, and the candour of your nature; easy to forgive some trivial faults, when they come accompanied with countervailing beauties. But, after all, though these are your equitable claims to a dedication from other poets, yet I must acknowledge a bribe in the case, which is your particular liking of my verses. It is a vanity common to all writers to overvalue their own productions; and it is better for me to own this failing in myself, than the world to do it for me. For what other reason have I spent my life in so unprofitable a study? why am I grown old in seeking so barren a reward as fame? The same parts and application, which have made me a poet, might have raised me to any honours of the gown, which are often given to men of as little learning and less honesty than myself. No government has ever been, or ever can be, wherein time-servers and blockheads will not be uppermost. The persons are only changed, but the same jugglings in state, the same hypocrisy in religion, the same self-interest and mismanagement, will remain for ever. Blood and money will be lavished in all ages, only for the preferment of new faces, with old consciences. There is too often a jaundice in the eyes of great men; they see not those whom they raise in the same colours with other men. All whom they affect, look golden to them, when the gilding is only in their own distempered sight. These considerations have given me a kind of contempt for those who have risen by unworthy ways. I am not ashamed to be little, when I see them so infamously great; neither do I know why the name of poet should be dishonourable to me, if I am truly one, as I hope I am; for I will never do anything that shall dishonour it. The notions of morality are known to all men: none can pretend ignorance of those ideas which are in-born in mankind: and if I see one thing, and practise the contrary, I must be disingenuous, not to acknowledge a clear truth, and base, to act against the light of my own conscience. For the reputation of my honesty,

no man can question it, who has any of his own : for that of my poetry, it shall either stand by its own merit, or fall for want of it. Ill writers are usually 'the sharpest censors ; for they (as the best poet and the best patron said)—

" When in the full perfection of decay,
Turn vinegar, and come again in play."

Thus the corruption of a poet is the generation of a critic : I mean of a critic in the general acceptance of this age ; for formerly they were quite another species of men. They were defenders of poets, and commentators on their works ; to illustrate obscure beauties ; to place some passages in a better light ; to redeem others from malicious interpretations ; to help out an author's modesty, who is not ostentatious of his wit ; and, in short, to shield him from the ill-nature of those fellows, who were then called Zoili and Momi, and now take upon themselves the venerable name of censors. But neither Zoilus, nor he who endeavoured to defame Virgil, were ever adopted into the name of critics by the ancients : what their reputation was then, we know ; and their successors in this age deserve no better. Are our auxiliary forces turned our enemies ? are they, who at best are but wits of the second order, and whose only credit amongst readers is what they obtained by being subservient to the fame of writers, are these become rebels of slaves, and usurpers of subjects ? or, to speak in the most honourable terms of them, are they from our seconds become principals against us ? Does the ivy undermine the oak, which supports its weakness ? What labour would it cost them to put in a better line, than the worst of those which they expunge in a true poet ? Petronius, the greatest wit perhaps of all the Romans, yet when his envy prevailed upon his judgment to fall on Lucan, he fell himself in his attempt : he performed worse in his *Essay of the Civil War*, than the author of the *Pharsalia* ; and avoiding his errors, has made greater of his own. Julius Scaliger would needs turn down Homer, and abdicate him after the possession of three thousand years : has he succeeded in his attempt ? He has indeed shown us some of those imperfections in him, which are incident to human kind ; but who had not rather be that Homer than this Scaliger ? You see the same hypercritic, when he endeavours to mend the beginning of Claudian (a faulty poet, and living in a barbarous age), yet how short he comes of him, and substitutes such verses of his own as deserve the ferula ! What a censure has he made of Lucan, that he rather seems to bark than sing ! Would any but a dog have made so snarling a comparison ? One would have thought he had learned Latin as late as they tell us he did Greek. Yet he came off, with a *pace tuâ*, by your good leave, Lucan ; he called him not by those outrageous names, of fool, booby, and blockhead : he had somewhat more of good manners than his successors, as he had much more knowledge. We have two sorts of those gentlemen in our nation : some of them proceeding with a seeming moderation and pretence of respect to the dramatic writers of the last age, only scorn and vilify the present poets, to set up their predecessors. But this is only in appearance ; for their real design is nothing less than to do honour to any man, besides themselves. Horace took notice of such men in his age :—

" Non ingeniis favet ille sepultis ;
Nostra sed impugnat ; nos nostraque lividus odit."

It is not with an ultimate intention to pay reverence to the manes of Shakspeare, Fletcher, and Ben Jonson, that they commend their writings, but to throw dirt on the

writers of this age : their declaration is one thing, and their practice is another. By a seeming veneration to our fathers, they would thrust out us their lawful issue, and govern us themselves, under a specious pretence of reformation. If they could compass their intent, what would wit and learning get by such a change? If we are bad poets, they are worse; and when any of their woful pieces come abroad, the difference is so great betwixt them and good writers, that there need no criticisms on our part to decide it. When they describe the writers of this age, they draw such monstrous figures of them, as resemble none of us : our pretended pictures are so unlike, that it is evident we never sat to them : they are all grotesque ; the products of their wild imaginations, things out of nature, so far from being copied from us, that they resemble nothing that ever was, or ever can be. But there is another sort of insects, more venomous than the former. Those who manifestly aim at the destruction of our poetical Church and State, who allow nothing to their countrymen, either of this or of the former age ; these attack the living by raking up the ashes of the dead ; well knowing that if they can subvert their original title to the stage, we who claim under them must fall of course. Peace be to the venerable shades of Shakspeare and Ben Jonson : none of the living will presume to have any competition with them : as they were our predecessors, so they were our masters. We trail our plays under them, but (as at the funerals of a Turkish emperor) our ensigns are furled or dragged upon the ground, in honour to the dead ; so we may lawfully advance our own, afterwards, to show that we succeed ; if less in dignity, yet on the same foot and title, which we think too we can maintain against the insolence of our own janizaries. If I am the man, as I have reason to believe, who am seemingly courted, and secretly undermined ; I think I shall be able to defend myself, when I am openly attacked : and to show besides that the Greek writers only gave us the rudiments of a stage which they never finished : that many of the tragedies in the former age amongst us were without comparison beyond those of Sophocles and Euripides. But at present, I have neither the leisure nor the means for such an undertaking. It is ill going to law for an estate with him who is in possession of it, and enjoys the present profits, to feed his cause. But the *quantum mutatus* may be remembered in due time. In the meanwhile, I leave the world to judge, who gave the provocation.

This, my Lord, is, I confess, a long digression, from Miscellany Poems* to modern tragedies ; but I have the ordinary excuse of an injured man, who will be telling his tale unseasonably to his betters ; though at the same time I am certain you are so good a friend as to take a concern in all things which belong to one who so truly honours you. And besides, being yourself a critic of the genuine sort, who have read the best authors in their own languages, who perfectly distinguish of their several merits, and in general prefer them to the moderns, yet, I know, you judge for the English tragedies, against the Greek and Latin, as well as against the French, Italian, and Spanish, of these latter ages. Indeed there is a vast difference betwixt arguing like Perrault in behalf of the French poets, against Homer and Virgil, and betwixt giving the the English poets their undoubted due of excelling Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles. For if we, or our greater fathers, have not yet brought the drama to an absolute perfection, yet at least we have carried it much farther than those ancient Greeks ; who, beginning from a chorus, could never totally exclude it, as we have done ; who find it an unprofitable incumbrance, without any necessity of entertaining it amongst us ; and without the possibility of establishing it here, unless it were supported by a public charge. Neither

* This Preface was prefixed to the third volume of the " Miscellany Poems," published in 1693.

can we accept of those lay-bishops, as some call them, who, under pretence of reforming the stage, would intrude themselves upon us, as our superiors, being indeed incompetent judges of what is manners, what religion, and, least of all, what is poetry and good sense. I can tell them in behalf of all my fellows, that when they come to exercise a jurisdiction over us, they shall have the stage to themselves, as they have the laurel. As little can I grant that the French dramatic writers excel the English; our authors as far surpass them in genius, as our soldiers excel theirs in courage. It is true, in conduct they surpass us either way; yet that proceeds not so much from their greater knowledge, as from the difference of tastes in the two nations. They content themselves with a thin design, without episodes, and managed by few persons. Our audience will not be pleased but with variety of accidents, an underplot, and many actors. They follow the ancients too servilely in the mechanic rules, and we assume too much license to ourselves in keeping them only in view, at too great a distance. But if our audience had their tastes, our poets could more easily comply with them, than the French writers could come up to the sublimity of our thoughts, or to the difficult variety of our designs. However it be, I dare establish it for a rule of practice on the stage, that we are bound to please those whom we pretend to entertain; and that at any price, religion and good manners only excepted; and I care not much, if I give this handle to our bad illiterate poetasters, for the defence of their *SCRIPTIONS*, as they call them. There is a sort of merit in delighting the spectators; which is a name more proper for them than that of auditors; or else Horace is in the wrong, when he commends Lucilius for it. But these common-places I mean to treat at greater leisure: in the meantime, submitting that little I have said to your Lordship's approbation, or your censure, and choosing rather to entertain you this way, as you are a judge of writing, than to oppress your modesty with other commendations; which, though they are your due, yet would not be equally received in this satirical and censorious age. That which cannot without injury be denied to you, is the easiness of your conversation, far from affectation or pride; not denying even to enemies their just praises. And this, if I would dwell on any theme of this nature, is no vulgar commendation to your Lordship. Without flattery, my Lord, you have it in your nature to be a patron and encourager of good poets, but your fortune has not yet put into your hands the opportunity of expressing it. What you will be hereafter, may be more than guessed by what you are at present. You maintain the character of a nobleman, without that haughtiness which generally attends too many of the nobility; and when you converse with gentlemen, you forget not that you have been of their order. You are married to the daughter of a king, who, amongst her other high perfections, has derived from him a charming behaviour, a winning goodness, and a majestic person. The Muses and the Graces are the ornaments of your family; while the Muse sings, the Grace accompanies her voice: even the servants of the Muses have sometimes had the happiness to hear her, and to receive their inspirations from her.

I will not give myself the liberty of going farther; for it is so sweet to wander in a pleasing way, that I should never arrive at my journey's end. To keep myself from being belated in my letter, and tiring your attention, I must return to the place where I was setting out. I humbly dedicate to your Lordship my own labours in this Miscellany; at the same time, not arrogating to myself the privilege of inscribing to you the works of others who are joined with me in this undertaking, over which I can pretend no right. Your lady and you have done me the favour to hear me read my translations of Ovid, and you both seemed not to be displeased with them. Whether it be the partiality of an old man to his youngest child, I know not; but they appear to me the best of all

my endeavours in this kind. Perhaps this poet is more easy to be translated than some others, whom I have lately attempted; perhaps, too, he was more according to my genius. He is certainly more palatable to the reader than any of the Roman wits, though some of them are more lofty, some more instructive, and others more correct. He had learning enough to make him equal to the best. But as his verse came easily, he wanted the toil of application to amend it. He is often luxuriant both in his fancy and expressions, and as it has lately been observed, not always natural. If wit be pleasantry, he has it to excess; but if it be propriety, Lucretius, Horace, and, above all, Virgil, are his superiors. I have said so much of him already in my preface to his Heroical Epistles, that there remains little to be added in this place. For my own part, I have endeavoured to copy his character what I could in this translation, even, perhaps, farther than I should have done; to his very faults. Mr. Chapman, in his translation of Homer, professes to have done it somewhat paraphrastically, and that on set purpose; his opinion being, that a good poet is to be translated in that manner. I remember not the reason which he gives for it; but I suppose it is for fear of omitting any of his excellencies; sure I am, that if it be a fault, it is much more pardonable than that of those who ran into the other extreme of a literal and close translation, where the poet is confined so straitly to his author's words, that he wants elbow-room to express his elegancies. He leaves him obscure; he leaves him prose, where he found him verse; and no better than thus has Ovid been served by the so much admired Sandys. This is at least the idea which I have remaining of his translation; for I never read him since I was a boy. They who take him upon content, from the praises which their fathers gave him, may inform their judgment by reading him again, and see (if they understand the original) what is become of Ovid's poetry in his version; whether it be not all, or the greatest part of it, evaporated. But this proceeded from the wrong judgment of the age in which he lived. They neither knew good verse nor loved it; they were scholars, it is true, but they were pedants. And for a just reward of their pedantic pains, all their translations want to be translated into English.

If I flatter not myself, or if my friends have not flattered me, I have given my author's sense, for the most part, truly: for to mistake sometimes is incident to all men, and not to follow the Dutch commentators always, may be forgiven to a man who thinks them, in the general, heavy, gross-witted fellows, fit only to gloss on their own dull poets. But I leave a farther satire on their wit, till I have a better opportunity to show how much I love and honour them. I have likewise attempted to restore Ovid to his native sweetness, easiness, and smoothness; and to give my poetry a kind of cadence, and, as we call it, a run of verse, as like the original, as the English can come up to the Latin. As he seldom uses any Synalcephas, so I have endeavoured to avoid them, as often as I could: I have likewise given him his own turns, both on the words and on the thought, which I cannot say are inimitable, because I have copied them: and so may others, if they use the same diligence: but certainly they are wonderfully graceful in this poet. Since I have named the Synalcepha, which is the cutting off one vowel immediately before another, I will give an example of it from Chapman's Homer, which lies before me; for the benefit of those who understand not the Latin Prosodia. It is in the first line of the Argument to the first Iliad:—

"Apollo's priest to th' Argive fleet doth bring," &c.

There we see he makes it not *the Argive*, but *th' Argive*, to shun the shock of the two

vowels, immediately following each other; but, in his second argument, in the same page, he gives a bad example of the quite contrary kind:—

"Alpha the pray'r of Chryses sings:
The army's plague, the strife of kings."

In these words *the army's*, the ending with a vowel, and *army's* beginning with another vowel, without cutting off the first, which by it had been *th' army's*, there remains a most horrible ill-sounding gap betwixt those words. I cannot say that I have everywhere observed the rule of the Synalcepha in my translation; but wheresoever I have not, it is a fault in sound: the French and the Italians have made it an inviolable precept in their versification; therein following the severe example of the Latin poets. Our countrymen have not yet reformed their poetry so far, but content themselves with following the licentious practice of the Greeks; who, though they sometimes use Synalcephas, yet make no difficulty very often, to sound one vowel upon another; as Homer does, in the very first line of Alpha. *Μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος*. It is true, indeed, that in the second line, in these words *μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς*, and *ἔθηκε*, the Synalcepha in revenge is twice observed. But it becomes us, for the sake of Euphony, rather *Musas colere severiores*, with the Romans, than to give into the looseness of the Grecians.

I have tired myself, and have been summoned by the press to send away this Dedication, otherwise I had exposed some other faults, which are daily committed by our English poets; which, with care and observation, might be amended. For, after all, our language is both copious, significant, and majestic, and might be reduced into a more harmonious sound. But, for want of public encouragement, in this iron age, we are so far from making any progress in the improvement of our tongue, that in few years, we shall speak and write as barbarously as our neighbours.

Notwithstanding my haste, I cannot forbear to tell your Lordship, that there are two fragments of Homer translated in this Miscellany; one by Mr. Congreve (whom I cannot mention without the honour which is due to his excellent parts, and that entire affection which I bear him) and the other by myself. Both the subjects are pathetic, and I am sure my friend has added to the tenderness which he found in the original, and, without flattery, surpassed his author. Yet I must needs say this in reference to Homer, that he is much more capable of exciting the many passions than those of grief and pity. To cause admiration, is indeed the proper and adequate design of an epic poem: and in that he has excelled even Virgil; yet, without presuming to arraign our master, I may venture to affirm, that he is somewhat too talkative, and more than somewhat too digressive. This is so manifest, that it cannot be denied, in that little parcel which I have translated, perhaps too literally: there Andromache, in the midst of her concernment and fright for Hector, runs off her bias, to tell him a story of her pedigree, and of the lamentable death of her father, her mother, and her seven brothers. The devil was in Hector if he knew not all this matter, as well as she who told it him; for she had been his bedfellow for many years together: and if he knew it, then it must be confessed, that Homer, in this long digression, has rather given us his own character, than that of the fair lady whom he paints. His dear friends, the commentators, who never fail him at a pinch, will needs excuse him, by making the present sorrow of Andromache to occasion the remembrance of all the past; but others think that she had enough to do with that grief which now oppressed her, without running for assistance to her family. Virgil, I am confident, would have omitted such a work of supererogation. But Virgil had the gift of

expressing much in little, and sometimes in silence : for though he yielded much to Homer in invention, he more excelled him in his admirable judgment. He drew the passion of Dido for Æneas in the most lively and most natural colours imaginable. Homer was ambitious enough of moving pity ; for he has attempted twice on the same subject of Hector's death : first, when Priam and Hecuba beheld his corpse, which was dragged after the chariot of Achilles ; and then in the lamentation which was made over him, when his body was redeemed by Priam : and the same persons again bewail his death, with a chorus of others to help the cry. But if this last excite compassion in you, as I doubt not but it will, you are more obliged to the translator than the poet : for Homer, as I observed before, can move rage better than he can pity : he stirs up the irascible appetite, as our philosophers call it ; he provokes to murder, and the destruction of God's images ; he forms and equips those ungodly man-killers, whom we poets, when we flatter them, call heroes ; a race of men who can never enjoy quiet in themselves till they have taken it from all the world. This is Homer's commendation, and such as it is, the lovers of peace, or at least of more moderate heroism, will never envy him. But let Homer and Virgil contend for the prize of honour betwixt themselves, I am satisfied they will never have a third concurrent. I wish Mr. Congreve had the leisure to translate him, and the world the good nature and justice to encourage him in that noble design, of which he is more capable than any man I know. The Earl of Mulgrave and Mr. Waller, two of the best judges of our age, have assured me, that they could never read over the translation of Chapman without incredible pleasure and extreme transport. This admiration of theirs must needs proceed from the author himself : for the translator has thrown him down as low as harsh numbers, improper English, and a monstrous length of verse could carry him. What, then, would he appear in the harmonious version of one of the best writers, living in a much better age than was the last ? I mean for versification, and the art of numbers : for in the drama we have not arrived to the pitch of Shakspeare and Ben Jonson. But here, my Lord, I am forced to break off abruptly, without endeavouring at a compliment in the close. This Miscellany is, without dispute, one of the best of the kind, which has hitherto been extant in our tongue. At least, as Sir Samuel Tuke has said before me, a modest man may praise what is not his own. My fellows have no need of any protection, but I humbly recommend my part of it, as much as it deserves, to your patronage and acceptance, and all the rest to your forgiveness.—I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

THE FIRST BOOK OF OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

OF bodies changed to various forms I sing.
Ye gods, from whence these miracles did
spring,
Inspire my numbers with celestial heat ;
Till I my long laborious work complete ;
And add perpetual tenor to my rhymes,
Deduced from nature's birth to Cæsar's
times.

Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
And heaven's high canopy, that covers all,
One was the face of nature, if a face ;
Rather a rude and indigested mass : 10
A lifeless lump, unfashioned, and un-
framed,

Of jarring seeds, and justly Chaos named.
No sun was lighted up the world to view ;
No moon did yet her blunted horns renew :
Nor yet was earth suspended in the sky ;
Nor, poised, did on her own foundations lie :
Nor seas about the shores their arms had
thrown ;

But earth, and air, and water, were in one.
Thus air was void of light, and earth un-
stable,

And water's dark abyss un navigable. 20
No certain form on any was impressed ;
All were confused, and each disturbed the
rest.

For hot and cold were in one body fixed,
And soft with hard, and light with heavy
mixed.

But God, or Nature, while they thus
contend,
To these intestine discords put an end.

Then earth from air, and seas from earth
were driven,
And grosser air sunk from ethereal heaven.
Thus disembroiled, they take their proper
place ;

The next of kin contiguously embrace ; 30
And foes are sundered by a larger space.
The force of fire ascended first on high,
And took its dwelling in the vaulted sky.
Then air succeeds, in lightness next to fire ;
Whose atoms from unactive earth retire.
Earth sinks beneath, and draws a numerous
throng

Of ponderous, thick, unwieldy seeds along.
About her coasts unruly waters roar,
And, rising on a ridge, insult the shore.

Thus when the God, whatever God was
he, 40

Had formed the whole, and made the parts
agree,

That no unequal portions might be found,
He moulded earth into a spacious round :
Then, with a breath, he gave the winds to
blow ;

And bade the congregated waters flow.
He adds the running springs, and standing
lakes ;

And bounding banks for winding rivers
makes.

Some part in earth are swallowed up, the
most

In ample oceans, disembogued, are lost,
He shades the woods, the valleys he re-
strains 50

With rocky mountains, and extends the
plains.

And as five zones the ethereal regions bind,
Five, correspondent, are to earth assigned :

The sun, with rays directly darting down,
Fires all beneath, and fries the middle
zone:

The two beneath the distant poles complain
Of endless winter, and perpetual rain.

Betwixt the extremes, two happier climates
hold

The temper that partakes of hot and cold.

The fields of liquid air, enclosing all, ⁶⁰

Surround the compass of this earthly ball :

The lighter parts lie next the fires above ;

The grosser near the watery surface move :

Thick clouds are spread, and storms engender there,

And thunder's voice, which wretched mortals fear,

And winds that on their wings cold winter bear.

Nor were those blustering brethren left at
large,

On seas and shores their fury to discharge :
Bound as they are, and circumscribed in
place,

They rend the world, resistless, where they
pass ; ⁷⁰

And mighty marks of mischief leave
behind ;

Such is the rage of their tempestuous kind.

First Eurus to the rising morn is sent,

(The regions of the balmy continent)

And eastern realms, where early Persians
run,

To greet the blest appearance of the sun.

Westward the wanton Zephyr wings his
flight,

Pleased with the remnants of departing
light :

Fierce Boreas with his offspring issues forth,

To invade the frozen waggon of the
North ; ⁸⁰

While frowning Auster seeks the southern
sphere,

And rots, with endless rain, the unwhole-
some year.

High o'er the clouds, and empty realms
of wind,

The God a clearer space for heaven de-
signed ;

Where fields of light, and liquid ether flow,
Purged from the ponderous dregs of earth
below.

Scarce had the Power distinguished these,
when straight

The stars, no longer overlaid with weight,
Exert their heads from underneath the mass,

And upward shoot, and kindle as they
pass, ⁹⁰

And with diffusive light adorn the heavenly
place.

Then, every void of nature to supply,
With forms of gods he fills the vacant sky :

New herds of beasts he sends, the plains to
share ;

New colonies of birds, to people air ;
And to their oozy beds the finny fish repair.

A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was Man de-
signed :

Conscious of thought, of more capacious
breast,

For empire formed, and fit to rule the
rest : ¹⁰⁰

Whether with particles of heavenly fire
The God of nature did his soul inspire ;

Or earth, but new divided from the sky,
And pliant still, retained the ethereal
energy :

Which wise Prometheus tempered into
paste,

And, mixed with living streams, the god-
like image cast.

Thus, while the mute creation downward
bend

Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,
Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes

Beholds his own hereditary skies. ¹¹⁰

From such rude principles our form began,

And earth was metamorphosed into man.

THE GOLDEN AGE.

The golden age was first ; when man,
yet new,

No rule but uncorrupted reason knew ;
And, with a native bent, did good pursue.

Unforced by punishment, unawed by fear,
His words were simple, and his soul
sincere :

Needless was written law, where none
oppressed ;

The law of man was written in his breast ;
No suppliant crowds before the judge
appeared ;

No court erected yet, nor cause was
heard ;

But all was safe, for conscience was their
guard.

The mountain trees in distant prospect
please,

Ere yet the pine descended to the seas ;

Ere sails were spread, new oceans to ex-
plore ;

And happy mortals, unconcerned for more,
Confined their wishes to their native
shore.

No walls were yet, nor fence, nor moat,
nor mound ;

Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry
sound :

Nor swords were forged ; but, void of care
and crime,

The soft creation slept away their time.

The teeming earth, yet guiltless of the
plough,

And unprovoked, did fruitful stores allow :
Content with food, which nature freely
bred,

On wildings and on strawberries they
fed ;

Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns furnished out a feast.

The flowers, unsown, in fields and meadows
reigned ;

And western winds immortal spring main-
tained.

In following years the bearded corn en-
sued

From earth unasked, nor was that earth
renewed.

From veins of valleys milk and nectar
broke,

And honey sweating through the pores of
oak.

THE SILVER AGE.

But when good Saturn, banished from
above,

Was driven to hell, the world was under
Jove.

Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excelled by gold.
Then Summer, Autumn, Winter did ap-
pear ;

And Spring was but a season of the year.
The sun his annual course obliquely
made,

Good days contracted, and enlarged the
bad.

Then air with sultry heats began to glow,
The wings of winds were clogged with ice
and snow ;

And shivering mortals, into houses driven,
Sought shelter from the inclemency of
heaven.

Those houses, then, were caves, or homely
sheds,

With twining osiers fenced, and moss their
beds.

Then ploughs, for seed, the fruitful furrows
broke,

And oxen laboured first beneath the yoke.

THE BRAZEN AGE.

To this next came in course the brazen
age :

A warlike offspring prompt to bloody rage,
Not impious yet——

THE IRON AGE.

—— Hard steel succeeded then ;
And stubborn as the metal were the men.

Truth, Modesty, and Shame, the world
forsook :

Fraud, Avarice, and Force, their places
took.

Then sails were spread to every wind that
blew ;

Raw were the sailors, and the depths were
new :

Trees, rudely hollowed, did the waves sus-
tain ;

Ere ships in triumph ploughed the watery
plain. 170

Then landmarks limited to each his
right :

For all before was common as the light.

Nor was the ground alone required to bear

Her annual income to the crooked share ;

But greedy mortals, rummaging her store,
Digged from her entrails first the precious
ore ;

Which next to hell the prudent gods had
laid ;

And that alluring ill to sight displayed.

Thus cursed steel, and more accursed gold,
Gave mischief birth, and made that mis-
chief bold : 180

And double death did wretched man in-
vade,

By steel assaulted, and by gold betrayed.

Now (brandished weapons glittering in
their hands)

Mankind is broken loose from moral
bands ;

No rights of hospitality remain :

The guest, by him who harboured him, is
slain :

The son-in-law pursues the father's life ;

The wife her husband murders, he the
wife.

The step-dame poison for the son pre-
pares ;

The son inquires into his father's years. 190

Faith flies, and Piety in exile mourns ;

And Justice here oppressed, to heaven re-
turns.

THE GIANTS' WAR.

Nor were the gods themselves more safe
above ;

Against beleaguered heaven the giants
move.

Hills piled on hills, on mountains mountains
lie,

To make their mad approaches to the sky.
Till Jove, no longer patient, took his time
To avenge with thunder their audacious
crime :

Red lightning played along the firmament,
And their demolished works to pieces
rent. 200

Singed with the flames, and with the bolts
transfixed,

With native earth their blood the monsters
mixed ;

The blood, indued with animating heat,
Did in the impregnate earth new sons beget ;
They, like the seed from which they sprung,
accursed,

Against the gods immortal hatred nursed :

An impious, arrogant, and cruel brood ;

Expressing their original from blood.

Which when the king of gods beheld from
high

(Withal revolving in his memory, 210

What he himself had found on earth of late,
Lycaon's guilt,* and his inhuman treat)

He sighed, nor longer with his pity strove ;
But kindled to a wrath becoming Jove ;

Then called a general council of the gods ;
Who, summoned, issue from their blest
abodes,

And fill the assembly with a shining train.

A way there is in heaven's expanded plain,
Which, when the skies are clear, is seen
below,

And mortals by the name of "Milky"
know. 220

The groundwork is of stars ; through which
the road

Lies open to the Thunderer's abode.

The gods of greater nations dwell around,

And on the right and left the palace bound ;

The commons where they can ; the nobler
sort,

With winding doors wide open, front the
court.

* Lycaon, a mythical King of Arcadia, turned
into a wolf. Lycanthropy is derived from his
name.

This place, as far as earth with heaven
may vie,

I dare to call the Louvre of the sky.

When all were placed, in seats distinctly
known,

And he, their father, had assumed the
throne, 230

Upon his ivory sceptre first he leant,
Then shook his head, that shook the firmament :

Air, earth, and seas, obeyed the Almighty
nod :

And, with a general fear, confessed the god.
At length, with indignation, thus he broke
His awful silence, and the powers bespoke.

"I was not more concerned in that
debate

Of empire, when our universal state
Was put to hazard, and the giant race
Our captive skies were ready to embrace: 240
For though the foe was fierce, the seeds of
all

Rebellion sprung from one original ;
Now wheresoever ambient waters glide,
All are corrupt, and all must be destroyed.

Let me this holy protestation make :

By hell, and hell's inviolable lake,

I tried whatever in the god-head lay ;

But gangrened members must be lopped
away,

Before the nobler parts are tainted to
decay.

There dwells below a race of demigods, 250
Of nymphs in waters, and of fauns in
woods ;

Who, though not worthy yet in heaven to
live,

Let 'em at least enjoy that earth we give.

Can these be thought securely lodged
below,

When I myself, who no superior know,
I, who have heaven and earth at my
command,

Have been attempted by Lycaon's hand ?"

At this a murmur through the synod
went,

And with one voice they vote his punish-
ment.

Thus, when conspiring traitors dared to
doom 260

The fall of Cæsar, and, in him, of Rome,

The nations trembled with a pious fear,

All anxious for their earthly thunderer ;

Nor was their care, O Cæsar, less esteemed

By thee, than that of heaven for Jove was
deemed :

Who with his hand, and voice, did first
restrain

Their murmurs, then resumed his speech
again.

The gods to silence were composed, and
sate

With reverence due to his superior state.

"Cancel your pious cares; already he 270

Has paid his debt to justice, and to me.

Yet what his crimes, and what my judgments
were,

Remains for me thus briefly to declare.

The clamours of this vile degenerate age,

The cries of orphans, and the oppressor's
rage,

Had reached the stars; I will descend,
said I,

In hope to prove this loud complaint a lie.

Disguised in human shape, I travelled
round

The world, and more than what I heard, I
found.

O'er Mænalus I took my steepy way, 280
By caverns infamous for beasts of prey.

Then crossed Cyllene, and the piny shade,

More infamous by cursed Lycaon made :

Dark night had covered heaven and earth,
before

I entered his unhospitable door.

Just at my entrance, I displayed the sign

That somewhat was approaching of divine.
The prostrate people pray; the tyrant
grins ;

And, adding profanation to his sins,
'I'll try,' said he, 'and if a god appear, 290

To prove his deity shall cost him dear.'

'Twas late; the graceless wretch my death
prepares,

When I should soundly sleep, oppressed
with cares :

This dire experiment he chose, to prove
If I were mortal, or undoubted Jove :
But first he had resolved to test my power :
Not long before, but in a luckless hour,
Some legates sent from the Molossian
state,

Were on a peaceful errand come to treat :
Of these he murders one, he boils the
flesh, 300
And lays the mangled morsels in a dish :
Some parts he roasts ; then serves it up so
dressed,

And bids me welcome to this human feast.
Moved with disdain, the table I o'eturned,
And with avenging flames the palace
burned.

The tyrant, in a fright, for shelter gains
The neighb'ring fields, and scours along the
plains.

Howling he fled, and fain he would have
spoke,

But human voice his brutal tongue forsook,
About his lips the gathered foam he
churns, 310

And breathing slaughter, still with rage he
burns,

But on the bleating flock his fury turns.
His mantle, now his hide, with rugged
hairs

Cleaves to his back ; a famished face he
bears ;

His arms descend, his shoulders sink away,
To multiply his legs for chase of prey.

He grows a wolf, his hoariness remains,
And the same rage in other members reigns,
His eyes still sparkle in a narrower space,
His jaws retain the grin, and violence of his
face. 320

" This was a single ruin, but not one
Deserves so just a punishment alone.
Mankind's a monster, and the ungodly
times,

Confederate into guilt, are sworn to crimes.
All are alike involved in ill, and all
Must by the same relentless fury fall."

Thus ended he ; the greater gods assent,
By clamours urging his severe intent ;
The less fill up the cry for punishment.

Yet still with pity they remember man ; 330
And mourn as much as heavenly spirits can.
They ask, when those were lost of human
birth,
What he would do with all his waste of
earth ?

If his dispeopled world he would resign
To beasts, a mute, and more ignoble line ?
Neglected altars must no longer smoke,
If none were left to worship and invoke.
To whom the father of the gods replied :
" Lay that unnecessary fear aside :
Mine be the care new people to provide. 340
I will from wondrous principles ordain
A race unlike the first, and try my skill
again."

Already had he tossed the flaming brand,
And rolled the thunder in his spacious
hand ;

Preparing to discharge on seas and land :
But stopped for fear, thus violently driven,
The sparks should catch his axletree of
heaven.

Remembering, in the Fates, a time, when
fire

Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,
And all his blazing worlds above should burn,
And all the inferior globe to cinders turn. 350
His dire artillery thus dismissed, he bent
His thoughts to some securer punishment :
Concludes to pour a watery deluge down ;
And, what he durst not burn, resolves to
drown.

The Northern breath, that freezes floods,
he binds ;

With all the race of cloud-dispelling winds :
The South he loosed, who night and horror
brings ;

And fogs are shaken from his flaggy wings.
From his divided beard two streams he
pours ; 360

His head and rheumy eyes distil in showers.
With rain his robe and heavy mantle flow :
And lazy mists are lowering on his brow,
Still as he swept along, with his clenched
fist,

He squeezed the clouds ; the imprisoned
clouds resist :

The skies, from pole to pole, with peals
resound ;

And showers enlarged come pouring on the
ground.

Then clad in colours of a various dye,

Junonian Iris breeds a new supply

To feed the clouds : impetuous rain de-
scends ; 370

The bearded corn beneath the burthen
bends :

Defrauded clowns deplore their perished
grain ;

And the long labours of the year are vain.

Nor from his patrimonial heaven alone

Is Jove content to pour his vengeance
down :

Aid from his brother of the seas he craves,
To help him with auxiliary waves.

The watery tyrant calls his brooks and
floods,

Who roll from mossy caves, their moist
abodes ;

And with perpetual urns his palace fill ; 380

To whom, in brief, he thus imparts his will.

" Small exhortation needs ; your powers
employ ;

And this bad world (so Jove requires)
destroy.

Let loose the reins to all your watery store :
Bear down the dams, and open every
door."

The floods by nature enemies to land,
And proudly swelling with their new
command,

Remove the living stones that stopped
their way,

And, gushing from their source, augment
the sea.

Then, with his mace, their monarch struck
the ground : 390

With inward trembling earth received the
wound ;

And rising streams a ready passage found.

The expanded waters gather on the plain,

They float the fields, and overtop the grain ;

Then rushing onwards, with a sweepy sway,

Bear flocks, and folds, and labouring hinds
away.

Nor safe their dwellings were ; for, sapped
by floods,

Their houses fell upon their household gods.

The solid piles, too strongly built to fall,

High o'er their heads behold a watery
wall. 400

Now seas and earth were in confusion lost ;
A world of waters, and without a coast.

One climbs a cliff ; one in his boat is
borne,

And ploughs above, where late he sowed
his corn.

Others o'er chimney-tops and turrets row,

And drop their anchors on the meads
below ;

Or downward driven, they bruise the tender
vine,

Or tossed aloft, are knocked against a
pine.

And where of late the kids had cropped
the grass,

The monsters of the deep now take their
place. 410

Insulting Nereids on the cities ride,

And wondering dolphins o'er the palace
glide.

On leaves, and masts of mighty oaks they
browse,

And their broad fins entangle in the boughs.
The frightened wolf now swims among the
sheep ;

The yellow lion wanders in the deep :

His rapid force no longer helps the boar :

The stag swims faster than he ran before.

The fowls, long beating on their wings in
vain,

Despair of land, and drop into the main. 420

Now hills and vales no more distinction
know

And levelled nature lies oppressed below.

The most of mortals perish in the flood,

The small remainder dies for want of food.

A mountain of stupendous height there
stands

Betwixt the Athenian and Boeotian lands,

The bound of fruitful fields, while fields
they were,

But then a field of waters did appear :

Parnassus is its name : whose forky rise
Mounts though the clouds, and mates the
lofty skies. 480

High on the summit of this dubious cliff,
Deucalion wafting, moored his little skiff.
He with his wife were only left behind
Of perished man ; they two were human
kind.

The mountain-nymphs and Themis they
adore,

And from her oracles relief implore.

The most upright of mortal men was he ;

The most sincere and holy woman, she.

When Jupiter, surveying earth from
high,

Beheld it in a lake of water lie, 440

That, where so many millions lately lived,

But two, the best of either sex, survived,

He loosed the northern wind ; fierce Boreas
flies

To puff away the clouds, and purge the
skies :

Serenely, while he blows, the vapours
driven

Discover heaven to earth, and earth to
heaven.

The billows fall, while Neptune lays his
mace

On the rough sea, and smooths its furrowed
face.

Already Triton, at his call, appears

Above the waves ; a Tyrian robe he
wears ; 460

And in his hand a crooked trumpet bears.

The sovereign bids him peaceful sounds
inspire,

And give the waves the signal to retire.

His writhen shell he takes, whose narrow
vent

Grows by degrees into a large extent ;

Then gives it breath ; the blast, with
doubling sound,

Runs the wide circuit of the world around.

The sun first heard it, in his early East,

And met the rattling echoes in the West.

The waters, listening to the trumpet's
roar, 460

Obeys the summons, and forsake the shore.

A thin circumference of land appears ;
And Earth, but not at once, her visage
rears,

And peeps upon the seas from upper
grounds :

The streams, but just contained within
their bounds,

By slow degrees into their channels crawl ;

And earth increases as the waters fall.

In longer time the tops of trees appear,

Which mud on their dishonoured branches
bear.

At length the world was all restored to
view, 470.

But desolate, and of a sickly hue :

Nature beheld herself, and stood aghast,

A dismal desert, and a silent waste.

Which when Deucalion, with a piteous
look,

Beheld, he wept, and thus to Pyrrha
spoke :

" Oh wife, oh sister, oh of all thy kind

The best and only creature left behind,

By kindred, love, and now by dangers
joined ;

Of multitudes, who breathed the common
air,

We two remain ; a species in a pair ; 480

The rest the seas have swallowed ; nor
have we

E'en of this wretched life a certainty.

The clouds are still above ; and, while I
speak,

A second deluge o'er our heads may break.

Should I be snatched from hence, and
thou remain,

Without relief, or partner of thy pain,

How could'st thou such a wretched life
sustain ?

Should I be left, and thou be lost, the sea,

That buried her I loved, should bury me.

Oh, could our father his old arts inspire, 490

And make me heir of his informing fire,

That so I might abolished man retrieve,

And perished people in new souls might live !

But Heaven is pleased, nor ought we to
complain,

That we, the examples of mankind, remain."

He said : the careful couple join their tears,
 And then invoke the gods, with pious prayers.
 Thus in devotion having eased their grief,
 From sacred oracles they seek relief :
 And to Cephissus' brook their way pursue : 500
 The stream was troubled, but the ford they knew.
 With living waters in the fountain bred,
 They sprinkle first their garments, and their head,
 Then took the way which to the temple led.
 The roofs were all defiled with moss and mire,
 The desert altars void of solemn fire.
 Before the gradual prostrate they adored,
 The pavement kissed ; and thus the saint implored.
 " O righteous Themis, if the powers above
 By prayers are bent to pity, and to love ; 510
 If human miseries can move their mind ;
 If yet they can forgive, and yet be kind ;
 Tell how we may restore, by second birth,
 Mankind, and people desolated earth."
 Then thus the gracious goddess, nodding, said :
 " Depart, and with your vestments veil your head :
 And stooping lowly down, with loosened zones,
 Throw each behind your backs your mighty mother's bones."
 Amazed the pair, and mute with wonder, stand,
 Till Pyrrha first refused the dire command. 520
 " Forbid it Heaven," said she, " that I should tear
 Those holy relics from the sepulchre."
 They pondered the mysterious words again,
 For some new sense ; and long they sought in vain.
 At length Deucalion cleared his cloudy brow,
 And said : " The dark enigma will allow

A meaning, which, if well I understand,
 From sacrilege will free the god's command :
 This earth our mighty mother is, the stones
 In her capacious body are her bones : 530
 These we must cast behind." With hope, and fear,
 The woman did the new solution hear :
 The man diffides in his own augury,
 And doubts the gods ; yet both resolve to try.
 Descending from the mount, they first unbend
 Their vests, and, veiled, they cast the stones behind :
 The stones (a miracle to mortal view,
 But long tradition makes it pass for true)
 Did first the rigour of their kind expel,
 And suppld into softness as they fell ; 540
 Then swelled, and, swelling, by degrees grew warm :
 And took the rudiments of human form ;
 Imperfect shapes, in marble such are seen ;
 When the rude chisel does the man begin ;
 While yet the roughness of the stone remains,
 Without the rising muscles, and the veins.
 The sappy parts, and next, resembling juice,
 Were turned to moisture, for the body's use :
 Supplying humours, blood, and nourishment :
 The rest, too solid to receive a bent, 550
 Converts to bones ; and what was once a vein,
 Its former name and nature did retain.
 By help of power Divine, in little space,
 What the man threw assumed a manly face ;
 And what the wife, renewed the female race,
 Hence we derive our nature, born to bear,
 Laborious life, and hardened into care.
 The rest of animals from teeming earth,
 Produced in various forms, received their birth.

The native moisture, in its close retreat, 280
 Digested by the sun's ethereal heat,
 As in a kindly womb, began to breed :
 Then swelled, and quickened by the vital
 seed.
 And some in less, and some in longer
 space,
 Were ripened into form, and took a several
 face,
 Thus when the Nile from Pharian fields
 is fled,
 And seeks, with ebbing tides, his ancient
 bed,
 The fat manure with heavenly fire is
 warmed,
 And crusted creatures, as in wombs, are
 formed :
 These, when they turn the globe, the
 peasants find : 270
 Some rude, and yet unfinished in their
 kind :
 Short of their limbs, a lame imperfect
 birth ;
 One half alive, and one of lifeless earth.
 For heat and moisture, when in bodies
 joined,
 The temper that results from either kind,
 Conception makes ; and fighting, till they
 mix,
 Their mingled atoms in each other fix.
 Thus Nature's hand the genial bed pre-
 pares
 With friendly discord, and with fruitful
 wars.
 From hence the surface of the ground
 with mud 280
 And slime besmeared (the fæces of the
 flood)
 Received the rays of heaven ; and suck-
 ing in
 The seeds of heat, new creatures did begin :
 Some were of several sorts produced be-
 fore ;
 But of new monsters earth created more.
 Unwillingly, but yet she brought to light
 These, Python, too, the wondering world
 to fright,
 And the new nations, with so dire a sight.

So monstrous was his bulk, so large a
 space
 Did his vast body and long train em-
 brace : 290
 Whom Phœbus basking on a bank espied ;
 Ere now the god his arrows had not tried
 But on the trembling deer, or mountain-
 goat ;
 At this new quarry he prepares to shoot,
 Though every shaft took place, he spent
 the store
 Of his full quiver ; and 'twas long before
 The expiring serpent wallowed in his gore.
 Then to preserve the fame of such a deed,
 For Python slain, he Pythian games de-
 creed,
 Where noble youths for mastership should
 strive, 300
 To quoit, to run, and steeds and chariots
 drive.
 The prize was fame, in witness of renown,
 An oaken garland did the victor crown.
 The laurel was not yet for triumphs borne,
 But every green alike by Phœbus worn
 Did, with promiscuous grace, his flowing
 locks adorn.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF DAPHNE INTO A LAUREL.

The first and fairest of his loves was
 she,
 Whom not blind fortune, but the dire
 decree
 Of angry Cupid forced him to desire :
 Daphne her name, and Peneus was her
 sire. 310
 Swelled with the pride that new success
 attends,
 He sees the stripling, while his bow he
 bends,
 And thus insults him : "Thou lascivious
 boy,
 Are arms like these for children to employ ?
 Know, such achievements are my proper
 claim ;
 Due to my vigour and unerring aim : "

Resistless are my shafts, and Python late,
In such a feathered death, has found his
fate.

Take up thy torch, and lay my weapons
by;

With that the feeble souls of lovers fry." 630

To whom the son of Venus thus replied :

" Phœbus, thy shafts are sure on all beside ;

But mine on Phœbus : mine the fame shall
be

Of all thy conquests, when I conquer thee."

He said, and soaring swiftly winged his
flight ;

Nor stopped but on Parnassus' airy height.

Two different shafts he from his quiver
draws ;

One to repel desire, and one to cause.

One shaft is pointed with refulgent gold,

To bribe the love, and make the lover
bold ; 630

One blunt, and tipped with lead, whose
base allay

Provokes disdain, and drives desire away.

The blunted bolt against the nymph he
dressed,

But with the sharp transfixed Apollo's
breast.

The enamoured deity pursues the chase ;
The scornful damsel shuns his loathed
embrace ;

In hunting beasts of prey her youth
employs ;

And Phœbe rivals in her rural joys.

With naked neck she goes, and shoulders
bare,

And with a fillet binds her flowing hair. 640

By many suitors sought, she mocks their
pains,

And still her vowed virginity maintains,

Impatient of a yoke, the name of bride

She shuns, and hates the joys she never
tried.

On wilds and wood she fixes her desire :

Nor knows what youth and kindly love
inspire.

Her father chides her oft : " Thou ow'st,"
says he,

" A husband to thyself, a son to me."

She, like a crime, abhors the nuptial bed :
She glows with blushes, and she hangs her
head. 650

Then, casting round his neck her tender
arms,

Soothes him with blandishments, and filial
charms :

" Give me, my lord," she said, " to live and
die

A spotless maid, without the marriage-tie.

'Tis but a small request ; I beg no more

Than what Diana's father gave before."

The good old sire was softened to consent ;

But said her wish would prove her punish-
ment :

For so much youth, and so much beauty
joined,

Opposed the state which her desires de-
signed. 660

The god of light, aspiring to her bed,
Hopes what he seeks, with flattering fancies
fed ;

And is by his own oracles misled.

And as in empty fields the stubble burns,

Or nightly travellers, when day returns,

Their useless torches on dry hedges throw,

That catch the flames, and kindle all the row ;

So burns the god, consuming in desire,

And feeding in his breast the fruitless fire.

Her well-turned neck he viewed (her neck
was bare) 670

And on her shoulders her dishevelled hair :

" Oh, were it combed," said he, " with what
a grace

Would every waving curl become her face !"

He viewed her eyes, like heavenly lamps
that shone ;

He viewed her lips, too sweet to view alone,

Her taper fingers, and her panting breast ;

He praises all he sees, and for the rest,

Believes the beauties yet unseen are best.

Swift as the wind, the damsel fled away,

Nor did for these alluring speeches stay : 680

" Stay, nymph," he cried, " I follow, not a
foe :

Thus from the lion trips the trembling doe ;

Thus from the wolf the frightened lamb
removes,

And from pursuing falcons fearful doves ;
Thou shunn'st a god, and shunn'st a god
that loves.

Ah, lest some thorn should pierce thy
tender foot,

Or thou should'st fall in flying my pursuit !
To sharp uneven ways thy steps decline ;
Abate thy speed, and I will bate of mine.

Yet think from whom thou dost so rashly
fly ;

Nor basely born, nor shepherd's swain
am I.

Perhaps thou know'st not my superior state ;
And from that ignorance proceeds thy hate.

Me Claros, Delphos, Tenedos obey ;
These hands the Pataraean sceptre sway.

The king of gods begot me : what shall be,
Or is, or ever was, in fate, I see.

Mine is the invention of the charming lyre ;
Sweet notes, and heavenly numbers I inspire.

Sure is my bow, unerring is my dart ; 700
But, ah, more deadly his, who pierced my
heart !

Med'cine is mine ; what herbs and simples
grow

In fields and forests, all their powers I know ,
And am the great physician called below.

Alas, that fields and forests can afford
No remedies to heal their love-sick lord !

To cure the pains of love, no plant avails ;
And his own physic the physician fails."

She heard not half, so furiously she flies,
And on her ear the imperfect accent dies. 710

Fear gave her wings : and as she fled, the
wind

Increasing spread her flowing hair behind ;
And left her legs and thighs exposed to view ;

Which made the god more eager to pursue.
The god was young, and was too hotly bent

To lose his time in empty compliment :
But led by love, and fired by such a sight,

Impetuously pursued his near delight.
As when the impatient greyhound, slipt

from far,
Bounds o'er the glebe, to course the fearful
hare, 720

She in her speed does all her safety lay ;
And he with double speed pursues the prey ;

O'erruns her at the fitting turn, and licks
His chaps in vain, and blows upon the flax : *
She 'scap's, and for the neighb'ring covert
strives,

And gaining shelter, doubts if yet she lives :
If little things with great we may compare,
Such was the god, and such the flying fair :
She, urged by fear, her feet did swiftly move,
But he more swiftly, who was urged by
love. 730

He gathers ground upon her in the chase ;
Now breathes upon her hair, with nearer
pace :

And just is fastening on the wished embrace.
The nymph grew pale, and in a mortal
fright,

Spent with the labour of so long a flight ;
And now despairing, cast a mournful look
Upon the streams of her paternal brook :
"Oh, help," she cried, "in this extremest
need,

If water-gods are deities indeed :
Gape, Earth, and this unhappy wretch
entomb : 740

Or change my form whence all my sorrows
come !"

Scarce had she finished, when her feet she
found

Benumbed with cold, and fastened to the
ground :

A filmy rind about her body grows,
Her hair to leaves, her arms extend to
boughs :

The nymph is all into a laurel gone.
The smoothness of her skin remains alone.

Yet Phœbus loves her still, and casting round
Her bole his arms, some little warmth he
found.

The tree still panted in the unfinished
part, 750

Not wholly vegetive, and heaved her heart.
He fixed his lips upon the trembling rind ;
It swerved aside, and his embrace declined.
To whom the god : "Because thou canst
not be

My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree :

Be thou the prize of honour and renown ;
 The deathless poet, and the poem, crown.
 Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
 And, after poets, be by victors worn.
 Thou shalt returning Cæsar's triumph
 grace ; 700
 When pomps shall in a long procession pass :
 Wreathed on the post before his palace
 wait ;
 And be the sacred guardian of the gate :
 Secure from thunder, and unharmed by Jove,
 Unfading as the immortal powers above :
 And as the locks of Phœbus are unshorn,
 So shall perpetual green thy boughs adorn."
 The grateful tree was pleased with what he
 said,
 And shook the shady honours of her head. *

MELEAGER AND ATALANTA.

OUT OF THE EIGHTH BOOK OF
 OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

Ovid, having told how Theseus had freed Athens from the tribute of children, which was imposed on them by Minos, king of Creta, by killing the Minotaur, here makes a digression to the story of Meleager and Atalanta, which is one of the most inartificial connections in all the *Metamorphoses*: for he only says, that Theseus obtained such honour from that combat, that all Greece had recourse to him in their necessities: and, amongst others, Calydon, though the hero of that country, prince Meleager, was then living.

FROM him † the Calydonians sought relief ;
 Though valiant Meleagrus was their chief.
 The cause, a boar, who ravaged far and
 near,
 Of Cynthia's wrath the avenging minister.

* We cannot resist giving here Wordsworth's beautiful lines on this fable :—

" Into the palace of feasting Time
 So far runs back the praise
 Of Beauty that disdains to climb
 Along forbidden ways ;
 That scorns temptation ; power defies
 Where mutual love is not,
 And to the tomb for refuge flies
 When life would be a blot."

† Theseus.

For Cæneus, with autumnal plenty blessed,
 By gifts to heaven his gratitude expressed :
 Culled sheafs, to Ceres ; to Lyseus, wine ;
 To Pan, and Pales, offered sheep and kine ;
 And fat of olives to Minerva's shrine.
 Beginning from the rural gods, his hand 10
 Was liberal to the powers of high command:
 Each deity in every kind was blessed,
 Till at Diana's fane the invidious honour
 ceased.
 Wrath touches even the gods ; the Queen
 of Night
 Fired with disdain, and jealous of her
 right,
 " Unhonoured though I am, at least," said
 she,
 " Not unrevenge'd that impious act shall
 be."
 Swift as the word, she sped the boar away,
 With charge on those devoted fields to
 prey.
 No larger bulls the Ægyptian pastures
 feed, 20
 And none so large Sicilian meadows breed :
 His eyeballs glare with fire, suffused with
 blood ;
 His neck shoots up a thick-set thorny
 wood ;
 His bristled back a trench impaled appears,
 And stands erected, like a field of spears.
 Froth fills his chaps, he sends a grunting
 sound,
 And part he churns, and part befoams the
 ground.
 For tusks with Indian elephants he strove,
 And Jove's own thunder from his mouth
 he drove.
 He burns the leaves ; the scorching blast
 invades 30
 The tender corn, and shrivels up the blades :
 Or, suffering not their yellow beards to
 rear,
 He tramples down the spikes, and intercepts
 the year.
 In vain the barns expect their promised
 load,
 Nor barns at home, nor reeks are heaped
 abroad :

In vain the hinds the threshing-floor pre-
pare,

And exercise their flails in empty air.

With olives ever green the ground is
strowed,

And grapes ungathered shed their gener-
ous blood.

Amid the fold he rages, nor the sheep 40
Their shepherds, nor the grooms their bulls
can keep.

From fields to walls the frightened rabble
run,

Nor think themselves secure within the
town :

Till Meleagrus, and his chosen crew,
Contemn the danger, and the praise pursue.
Fair Leda's twins, (in time to stars de-
creed)

One fought on foot, one curbed the fiery
steed ;

Then issued forth famed Jason after these,
Who manned the foremost ship that sailed
the seas ;

Then Theseus, joined with bold Pirithous,
came, 50

A single concord, in a double name :

The Theban sons, Idas who swiftly ran,
And Cæneus, once a woman, now a man.

Lynceus, with eagle's eyes, and lion's
heart ;

Leucippus, with his never-erring dart ;

Acastus, Phileus, Phoenix, Telamon.

Echion, Lelex, and Eurytion,

Achilles' father, and great Phocus' son ;

Dryas the fierce, and Hippasus the strong ;

With twice old Iolas, and Nestor then but
young. 60

Laertes active, and Ancæus bold ;

Mopsus the sage, who future things fore-
told ;

And t'other seer yet by his wife unsold.*

A thousand others of immortal fame ;

Among the rest fair Atalanta came,

* Amphiaræus: foreseeing that if he went to the Theban war he would perish, he hid himself to avoid going to it; but his retreat was betrayed by his wife Eriphyle, to obtain the bribe Polynices offered her—a valuable necklace.

Grace of the woods: a diamond buckle
bound

Her vest behind, that else had flowed upon
the ground,

And showed her buskined legs: her head
was bare,

But for her native ornament of hair ; 70

Which in a simple knot was tied above,

Sweet negligence, unheeded bait of love !

Her sounding quiver on her shoulder tied,

One hand a dart, and one a bow sup-
plied.

Such was her face, as in a nymph dis-
played

A fair fierce boy, or in a boy betrayed

The blushing beauties of a modest maid.

The Calydonian chief at once the dame

Beheld, at once his heart received the
flame,

With heavens averse. " Oh happy youth,"
he cried ; 80

" For whom thy Fates reserve so fair a
bride !"

He sighed, and had no leisure more to
say ;

His honour called his eyes another way,

And forced him to pursue the now neglected
prey.

There stood a forest on the mountain's
brow,

Which overlooked the shaded plains below.

No sounding axe presumed those trees to
bite ;

Coeval with the world, a venerable sight.

The heroes there arrived, some spread
around

The toils, some search the footsteps on the
ground,

Some from the chains the faithful dogs
unbound. 90

Of action eager, and intent on thought,

The chiefs their honourable danger sought :

A valley stood below ; the common drain

Of waters from above, and falling rain :

The bottom was a moist and marshy
ground,

Whose edges were with bending osiers
crowned ;

The knotty bulrush next in order stood,
And all within of reeds a trembling wood.

From hence the boar was roused, and
sprung amain,

Like lightning sudden, on the warrior-
train; 100

Beats down the trees before him, shakes
the ground,

The forest echoes to the crackling sound;
Shout the fierce youth, and clamours ring
around.

All stood with their protended spears pre-
pared,

With broad steel heads the brandished
weapons glared.

The beast impetuous with his tusks aside
Deals glancing wounds; the fearful dogs
divide:

All spend their mouth aloft, but none abide.
Echion threw the first, but missed his mark,
And stuck his boar-spear on a maple's
bark. 110

Then Jason; and his javelin seemed to take,
But failed with over-force, and whizzed
above his back.

Mopsus was next: but, ere he threw,
addressed

To Phœbus thus: "O patron, help thy
priest;

If I adore, and ever have adored
Thy power divine, thy present aid afford;
That I may reach the beast." The god
allowed

His prayer, and, smiling, gave him what
he could:

He reached the savage, but no blood he
drew;

Dian unarmed the javelin as it flew. 120
This chafed the boar; his nostrils flames
expire,

And his red eyeballs roll with living fire.
Whirled from a sling, or from an engine
thrown,

Amidst the foes, so flies a mighty stone,
As flew the beast; the left wing put to
flight,

The chiefs o'erborne, he rushes on the
right.

Empalamos and Pelagon he laid
In dust, and next to death, but for their
fellows' aid.

Onesimus fared worse, prepared to fly;
The fatal fang drove deep within his
thigh, 130

And cut the nerves; the nerves no more
sustain

The bulk; the bulk unpropped falls head-
long on the plain.

Nestor had failed the fall of Troy to see,
But, leaning on his lance, he vaulted on a
tree;

Then gathering up his feet, looked down
with fear,

And thought his monstrous foe was still
too near.

Against a stump his tusk the monster
grinds,

And in the sharpened edge new vigour finds;
Then, trusting to his arms, young Othrys
found,

And ranched his hips with one continued
wound. 140

Now Leda's twins, the future stars, ap-
pear;

White were their habits, white their horses
were;

Conspicuous both, and both in act to
throw,

Their trembling lances brandished at the
foe:

Nor had they missed; but he to thickets
fled,

Concealed from aiming spears, not perviews
to the steed.

But Telamon rushed in, and hopped to
meet

A rising root, that held his fastened feet;
So down he fell, whom, sprawling on the
ground,

His brother from the wooden gyves un-
bound. 150

Meantime the virgin-huntress was not slow
To expel the shaft from her contracted bow:

Beneath his ear the fastened arrow stood,
And from the wound appeared the trick-
ling blood.

She blushed her joy : but Meleagrus raised
His voice with loud applause, and the fair
archer praised.

He was the first to see, and first to show
His friends the marks of the successful
blow.

"Nor shall thy valour want the praises
due,"

He said ; a virtuous envy seized the
crew. 160

They shout ; the shouting animates their
hearts,

And all at once employ their thronging
darts ;

But out of order thrown, in air they join ;
And multitude makes frustrate the design.

With both his hands the proud Ancæus
takes

And flourishes his double-biting axe :
Then forward to his fate, he took a
stride

Before the rest, and to his fellows cried,
"Give place, and mark the difference, if
you can, 170

Between a woman-warrior and a man ;
The boar is doomed ; nor, though Diana
lend

Her aid, Diana can her beast defend."

Thus Loasted he ; then stretched, on tiptoe
stood,

Secure to make his empty promise good.
But the more wary beast prevents the
blow,

And upward rips the groin of his audacious
foe.

Ancæus falls ; his bowels from the wound
Rush out, and clotted blood distains the
ground.

Pirithous, no small portion of the war,
Pressed on, and shook his lance : to whom
from far, 180

Thus Theseus cried : "O stay, my better
part.

My more than mistress ; of my heart, the
heart :

The strong may fight aloof : Ancæus tried
His force too near, and by presuming
died."

He said, and, while he spake, his javelin
threw ;

Hissing in air the unerring weapon flew ;
But on an arm of oak, that stood betwixt
The marksman and the mark, his lance he
fixed.

Once more bold Jason threw, but failed
to wound 190

The boar, and slew an undeserving hound ;
And through the dog the dart was nailed
to ground.

Two spears from Meleager's hand were
sent,
With equal force, but various in the event :
The first was fixed in earth, the second
stood

On the boar's bristled back, and deeply
drank his blood.

Now while the tortured salvage turns
around,
And flings about his foam, impatient of the
wound ;

The wound's great author close at hand
provokes

His rage, and plies him with redoubled
strokes ;

Wheels as he wheels ; and with his pointed
dart 200

Explores the nearest passage to his heart.
Quick and more quick he spins in giddy
gyres,

Then falls, and in much foam his soul
expires.

This act with shouts heaven-high the
friendly band

Applaud, and strain in theirs the victor's
hand.

Then all approach the slain with vast sur-
prise,

Admire on what a breadth of earth he lies ;
And, scarce secure, reach out their spears
afar,

And blood their points, to prove their
partnership of war,

But he, the conquering chief, his foot
impressed 210

On the strong neck of that destructive
beast ;

And gazing on the nymph with ardent eyes,
 "Accept," said he, "fair Nonacrine, thy
 prize;

And, though inferior, suffer me to join
 My labours, and my part of praise, with
 thine."

At this presents her with the tusky head
 And chine, with rising bristles roughly
 spread.

Glad, she received the gift; and, seemed to
 take

With double pleasure, for the giver's sake.
 The rest were seized with sullen discon-
 tent, 230

And a deaf murmur through the squadron
 went;

All envied; but the Thestian brethren
 showed

The least respect, and thus they vent their
 spleen aloud:

"Lay down those honoured spoils, nor
 think to share,

Weak woman as thou art, the prize of
 war:

Ours is the title, thine a foreign claim,
 Since Meleagrus from our lineage came.

Trust not thy beauty; but restore the prize,
 Which he, besotted on that face and eyes,
 Would rend from us." At this, inflamed
 with spite, 230

From her they snatch the gift, from him
 the giver's right.

But soon the impatient prince his
 fauchion drew,

And cried, "Ye robbers of another's due,
 Now learn the difference, at your proper
 cost,

Betwixt true valour, and an empty boast."
 At this advanced, and, sudden as the
 word,

In proud Plexippus' bosom plunged the
 sword:

Toxeus amazed, and with amazement slow
 Or to revenge, or ward the coming blow,
 Stood doubting; and, while doubting thus
 he stood, 240

Received the steel bathed in his brother's
 blood.

Pleased with the first, unknown the
 second news,

Althæa to the temples pays their dues
 For her son's conquest; when at length
 appear

Her grisly brethren stretched upon the bier:
 Pale, at the sudden sight, she changed her
 cheer,

And with her cheer her robes; but hear-
 ing tell

The cause, the manner, and by whom they
 fell,

'Twas grief no more, or grief and rage
 were one

Within her soul; at last 'twas rage
 alone; 250

Which burning upwards in succession
 dries

The tears that stood considering in her
 eyes.

There lay a log unlighted on the hearth:
 When she was labouring in the throes of
 birth

For the unborn chief, the fatal sisters came,
 And raised it up, and tossed it on the
 flame:

Then on the rock a scanty measure place
 Of vital flax, and turned the wheel apace;
 And turning sung, "To this red brand and
 thee,

O new-born babe, we give an equal de-
 tiny." 260

So vanished out of view. The frightened
 dame

Sprung hasty from her bed, and quenched
 the flame:

The log, in secret locked, she kept with
 care,

And that, while thus preserved, preserved
 her heir.

This brand she now produced; and first
 she strows

The hearth with heaps of chips, and after
 blows;

Thrice heaved her hand, and heaved, she
 thrice repressed:

The sister and the mother long contest,
 Two doubtful titles in one tender breast:

And now her eyes and cheeks with fury
glow, 270

Now pale her cheeks, her eyes with pity
flow ;

Now lowering looks presage approaching
storms,

And now prevailing love her face reforms :
Resolved, she doubts again ; the tears, she
dried

With blushing rage, are by new tears sup-
plied ;

And as a ship, which winds and waves
assail,

Now with the current drives, now with the
gale,

Both opposite, and neither long prevail,
She feels a double force, by turns obeys
The imperious tempest, and the impetuous
seas : 280

So fares Althrea's mind ; first she relents
With pity, of that pity then repents :
Sister and mother long the scales divide,
But the beam nodded on the sister's side.
Sometimes she softly sighed, then roared
aloud ;

But sighs were stifled in the cries of blood.
The pious impious wretch at length de-
creed,

To please her brothers' ghosts, her son
should bleed ;

And when the funeral flames began to rise,
" Receive," she said, " a sister's sacrifice : 290
A mother's bowels burn." High in her
hand,

Thus while she spoke, she held the fatal
brand ;

Then thrice before the kindled pile she
bowed,

And the three Furies thrice invoked aloud :
" Come, come, revenging sisters, come and
view

A sister paying her dead brothers' due ;
A crime I punish, and a crime commit ;
But blood for blood, and death for death
is fit :

Great crimes must be with greater crimes
repaid,

And second funerals on the former laid. 300

Let the whole household in one ruin fall,
And may Diana's curse o'ertake us all.

Shall Fate to happy Ceneus still allow
One son, while Thestius stands deprived of
two ?

Better three lost, than one unpunished go.
Take then, dear ghosts, (while yet, admitted
new

In hell, you wait my duty) take your due ;
A costly offering on your tomb is laid,
When with my blood the price of yours is
paid.

" Ah ! whither am I hurried ? Ah ! for-
give, 310

Ye shades, and let your sister's issue live ;
A mother cannot give him death ; though
he

Deserves it, he deserves it not from me.

" Then shall the unpunished wretch in-
sult the slain,

Triumphant live ? not only live, but reign ?
While you, thin shades, the sport of winds
are tossed

O'er dreary plains, or tread the burning
coast.

I cannot, cannot bear ; 'tis past, 'tis done ;
Perish this impious, this detested son ;

Perish his sire, and perish I withal ; 320
And let the house's heir, and the hoped
kingdom fall.

" Where is the mother fled, her pious love,
And where the pains with which ten months
I strove !

Ah ! hadst thou died, my son in infant
years,

Thy little hearse had been bedewed with
tears.

" Thou liv'st by me ; to me thy breath
resign ;

Mine is the merit, the demerit thine.
Thy life by double title I require ;
Once given at birth, and once preserved
from fire : *

* At Meleager's birth, Atropos, one of the
Fates, threw a brand into the fire and said that
the infant should live only as long as the brand
burned. The mother snatched it from the flames,
thus preserving her son's life. She had kept
it carefully ever since

One murder pay, or add one murder
more, 330

And me to them who fell by thee restore.

"I would, but cannot: my son's image
stands

Before my sight; and now their angry
hands

My brothers hold, and vengeance these
exact,

This pleads compassion, and repents the
fact.

"He pleads in vain, and I pronounce his
doom:

My brothers, though unjustly, shall o'er-
come.

But having paid their injured ghosts their
due,

My son requires my death, and mine shall
his pursue."

At this for the last time she lifts her
hand, 340

Averts her eyes, and half unwilling drops
the brand.

The brand, amid the flaming fuel thrown,
Or drew, or seemed to draw, a dying groan;
The fires themselves but faintly licked their
prey,

Then loathed their impious food, and would
have shrunk away.

Just then the hero cast a doleful cry,

And in those absent flames began to fry:

The blind contagion raged within his veins;
But he with manly patience bore his pains;

He feared not fate, but only grieved to
die 350

Without an honest wound, and by a death
so dry.

"Happy Ancæus," thrice aloud he cried,

"With what becoming fate in arms he
died!"

Then called his brothers, sisters, sire,
around,

And her to whom his nuptial vows were
bound;

Perhaps his mother; a long sigh he drew,

And his voice failing, took his last adieu:
For as the flames augment, and as they stay
At their full height, then languish to decay,

They rise, and sink by fits; at last they
soar 360

In one bright blaze, and then descend no
more:

Just so his inward heats, at height, impair,
Till the last burning breath shoots out the
soul in air.

Now lofty Calydon in ruins lies;

All ages, all degrees, unsluice their eyes;

And heaven and earth resound with mur-
murs, groans, and cries.

Matrons and maidens beat their breasts,
and tear

Their habits, and root up their scattered
hair.

The wretched father, father now no more,
With sorrow sunk, lies prostrate on the
floor, 370

Deforms his hoary locks with dust obscene,
And curses age, and loathes a life prolonged
with pain.

By steel her stubborn soul his mother
freed,

And punished on herself her impious deed.

Had I a hundred tongues, a wit so large

As could their hundred offices discharge;

Had Phœbus all his Helicon bestowed,

In all the streams inspiring all the god;

Those tongues, that wit, those streams,
that god in vain

Would offer to describe his sisters' pain: 380

They beat their breasts with many a bruise
ing blow,

Till they turn livid, and corrupt the snow.

The corpse they cherish, while the corpse
remains,

And exercise and rub with fruitless pains;

And when to funeral flames 'tis borne away,

They kiss the bed on which the body lay:

And when those funeral flames no longer
burn,

(The dust composed within a pious urn)

Even in that urn their brother they confess,
And hug it in their arms, and to their

bosoms press. 390

His tomb is raised; then, stretched along
the ground,

Those living monuments his tomb surround:

Even to his name, inscribed, their tears they pay,

Till tears and kisses wear his name away.

But Cynthia now had all her fury spent,
Not with less ruin, than a race, content :
Excepting Gorge, perished all the seed,
And her whom Heaven for Hercules decreed.
Sate at last, no longer she pursued
The weeping sisters ; but with wings in-
duced, 400

And horny beaks, and sent to flit in air ;
Who yearly round the tomb in feathered
flocks repair.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

OUT OF THE EIGHTH BOOK OF
OVID'S METAMORPHOSES

The author, pursuing the deeds of Theseus, relates how he, with his friend Pirithous, were invited by Achelous, the river god, to stay with him, till his waters were abated. Achelous entertains them with a relation of his own love to Perimele, who was changed into an island by Neptune, at his request. Pirithous, being an atheist, derides the legend, and denies the power of the gods to work that miracle. Lelex, another companion of Theseus, to confirm the story of Achelous, relates another metamorphosis of Baucis and Philemon into trees ; of which he was partly an eye-witness.

THUS Achelous ends : his audience hear
With admiration, and, admiring, fear
The powers of heaven ; except Ixion's son,
Who laughed at all the gods, believed in
none ;

He shook his impious head, and thus replies :
" These legends are no more than pious
lies :

You attribute too much to heavenly sway,
To think they give us forms, and take away."

The rest, of better minds, their sense de-
clared

Against this doctrine, and with horror
heard, 10

Then Lelex rose, an old experienced man,
And thus with sober gravity began :

" Heaven's power is infinite : earth, air and
sea,

The manufacture mass, the making power
obey :

By proof to clear your doubt ; in Phrygian
ground

Two neighb'ring trees, with walls encom-
passed round,

Stand on a moderate rise, with wonder
shown,

One a hard oak, a softer linden one :

I saw the place and them, by Pitheus
sent

To Phrygian realms, my grandsire's govern-
ment. 20

Not far from thence is seen a lake, the haunt
Of coots, and of the fishing cormorant :

Here Jove with Hermes came ; but in dis-
guise

Of mortal men concealed their deities :

One laid aside his thunder, one his rod ;

And many toilsome steps together trod ;

For harbour at a thousand doors they
knocked,

Not one of all the thousand but was locked.

At last an hospitable house they found,

An homely shed ; the roof, not far from
ground, 30

Was thatched with reeds and straw to-
gether bound.

There Baucis and Philemon lived, and there

Had lived long married, and a happy pair :

Now old in love ; though little was their
store,

Inured to want, their poverty they bore,

Nor aimed at wealth, professing to be poor.

For master or for servant here to call,

Was all alike, where only two were all.

Command was none, where equal love was
paid,

Or rather both commanded, both obeyed. 40

From lofty roofs the gods repulsed before,
Now stooping, entered through the little
door ;

The man (their hearty welcome first ex-
pressed)

A common settle drew for either guest,

Inviting each his weary limbs to rest.

But ere they sat, officious Baucis lays
Two cushions stuffed with straw, the seat
to raise;

Coarse, but the best she had; then takes
the load

Of ashes from the hearth, and spreads abroad
The living coals, and, lest they should
expire, 80

With leaves and barks she feeds her infant
fire:

It smokes, and then with trembling breath
she blows,

Till in a cheerful blaze the flames arose.

With brushwood and with chips she streng-
thens these,

And adds at last the boughs of rotten trees.
The fire thus formed, she sets the kettle on,
(Like burnished gold the little seether shone)
Next took the coleworts which her husband
got

From his own ground (a small well-watered
spot);

She stripped the stalks of all their leaves;
the best 80

She culled, and then with handy care she
dressed,

High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon
hung;

Good old Philemon seized it with a prong,
And from the sooty rafter drew it down,
Then cut a slice, but scarce enough for one:
Yet a large portion of a little store,
Which for their sakes alone he wished were
more.

This in the pot he plunged without delay,
To tame the flesh, and drain the salt away.
The time between, before the fire they sat, 70
And shortened the delay by pleasing chat.

A beam there was, on which a beechen
pail

Hung by the handle, on a driven nail:
This filled with water, gently warmed, they
set

Before their guests; in this they bathed
their feet,

And after with clean towels dried their
sweat.

This done, the host produced the genial bed

Sallow the foot, the borders, and the stead,
Which with no costly coverlet they spread;
But coarse old garments, yet such robes as
these 80

They laid alone, at feasts, on holidays.

The good old housewife, tucking up her
gown,

The table sets; the invited gods lie down.

The trivet-table of a foot was lame,

A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,

Who thrust beneath the limping leg a
sherd,

So was the mended board exactly reared:

Then rubbed it o'er with newly gathered
mint;

A wholesome herb, that breathed a grate-
ful scent.

Pallas began the feast, where first was seen 80

The party-coloured olive, black and green:
Autumnal cornels next in order served,

In lees of wine well pickled and preserved:

A garden salad was the third supply,

Of endive, radishes, and succory:

Then curds and cream, the flower of country
fare,

And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' busy care
Turned by a gentle fire, and roasted rare.

All these in earthenware were served to
board;

And, next in place, an earthen pitcher,
stored 100

With liquor of the best the cottage could
afford.

This was the table's ornament and pride,
With figures wrought: like pages at his side
Stood beechen bowls; and these were
shining clean,
Varnished with wax without, and lined
within.

By this the boiling kettle had prepared,

And to the table sent the smoking lard;

On which with eager appetite they dine,

A savoury bit, that served to relish wine:

The wine itself was suiting to the rest, 110

Still working in the must, and lately pressed.

The second course succeeds like that before;

Plums, apples, nuts, and, of their wintry
store,

Dry figs and grapes, and wrinkled dates
were set

In canisters, to enlarge the little treat :
All these a milk-white honeycomb surround,
Which in the midst the country banquet
crowned.

But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
With hearty welcome, and an open face ;
In all they did, you might discern with
ease 120

A willing mind, and a desire to please.

Meantime the beechen bowls went round,
and still,

Though often emptied, were observed to fill,
Filled without hands, and of their own
accord

Ran without feet, and danced about the
board.

Devotion seized the pair, to see the feast
With wine, and of no common grape, in-
creased ;

And up they held their hands, and fell to
prayer,

Excusing, as they could, their country fare.
One goose they had ('twas all they could
allow) 120

A wakeful sentry, and on duty now,
Whom to the gods for sacrifice they vow .
Her, with malicious zeal, the couple viewed .
She ran for life, and, limping, they pursued :
Full well the fowl perceived their bad intent,
And would not make her master's compli-
ment ;

But, persecuted, to the powers she flies,
And close between the legs of Jove she lies
He, with a gracious ear, the suppliant heard,
And saved her life ; then what he was
declared, 140

And owned the god. " The neighbour-
hood," said he,

" Shall justly perish for impiety :
You stand alone exempted ; but obey
With speed, and follow where we lead the
way :

Leave these accursed ; and to the moun-
tain's height

Ascend ; nor once look backward in your
flight

They haste, and what their tardy fee
denied,

The trusty staff (their better leg) supplied.
An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
And there secure, but spent with travel,
stop ; 150

Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes ;
Lost in a lake the floated level lies :

A watery desert covers all the plains,
Their cot alone, as in an isle remains :

Wondering with peeping eyes, while they
deplore

Their neighbours' fate, and country now
no more,

Their littleshed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems, from the ground increased, in height
and bulk to grow.

A stately temple shoots within the skies :

The crotches of their cot in columns rise : 160
The pavement polished marble they behold,
The gates with sculpture graced, the spires
and tiles of gold.

Then thus the sire of gods, with looks
serene,

" Speak thy desire, thou only just of men ;
And thou, O woman, only worthy found
To be with such a man in marriage bound."

Awhile they whisper, then, to Jove ad-
dressed,

Philemon thus prefers their joint request :

" We crave to serve before your sacred
shrine,

And offer at your altars rites divine : 170

And since not any action of our life

Has been polluted with domestic strife,

We beg one hour of death ; that neither she

With widow's tears may live to bury me,

Nor weeping I, with withered arms, may bear

My breathless Baucis to the sepulchre."

The godheads sign their suit. They run
their race

In the same tenor all the appointed space ;

Then, when their hour was come, while they
relate

These past adventures at the temple-gate, 180

Old Baucis is by old Philemon seen

Sprouting with sudden leaves of sprightly

green :

Old Baucis looked where old Philemon stood,
 And saw his lengthened arms a sprouting wood :
 New roots their fastened feet begin to bind,
 Their bodies stiffen in a rising rind :
 Then, ere the bark above their shoulders grew,
 They give and take at once their last adieu ;
 At once, " Farewell, oh faithful spouse,"
 they said ;
 At once the encroaching rinds their closing lips invade. 190
 Even yet, an ancient Tyanæan shows
 A spreading oak, that near a linden grows ;
 The neighbourhood confirm the prodigy,
 Grave men, not vain of tongue, or like to lie.
 I saw myself the garlands on their boughs,
 And tablets hung for gifts of granted vows ;
 And offering fresher up, with pious prayer,
 " The good," said I, " are God's peculiar care,
 And such as honour Heaven shall heavenly honour share."

CEYX AND ALCYONE.

OUT OF THE ELEVENTH BOOK OF
 OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

Ceyx, the son of Lucifer (the morning star) and king of Trachin, in Thessaly, was married to Alcyone, daughter to Æolus, god of the winds. Both the husband and the wife loved each other with an entire affection. Dædalion, the elder brother of Ceyx, whom he succeeded, having been turned into a falcon by Apollo, and Chione, Dædalion's daughter, slain by Diana, Ceyx prepares a ship to sail to Claros, there to consult the oracle of Apollo, and (as Ovid seems to intimate) to enquire how the anger of the gods might be atoned.

THESE prodigies affect the pious prince,
 But, more perplexed with those that happened since,
 He purposes to seek the Clarian god,
 Avoiding Delphos, his more famed abode ;
 Since Phlegian robbers made unsafe the road.

Yet could not he from her he loved so well,
 The fatal voyage, he resolved, conceal :
 But when she saw her lord prepared to part,
 A deadly cold ran shivering to her heart ;
 Her faded cheeks are changed to boxen hue, 10

And in her eyes the tears are ever new ;
 She thrice essayed to speak ; her accents hung,
 And faltering died unfinished on her tongue,
 Or vanished into sighs : with long delay
 Her voice returned ; and found the wonted way.

" Tell me, my lord," she said, " what fault unknown

Thy once beloved Alcyone has done ?
 Whither, ah, whither is thy kindness gone !
 Can Ceyx then sustain to leave his wife,
 And unconcerned forsake the sweets of life ? 20

What can thy mind to this long journey move,
 Or need'st thou absence to renew thy love ?
 Yet, if thou goest by land, though grief possess

My soul even then, my fears will be the less.
 But ah ! be warned to shun the watery way,
 The face is frightful of the stormy sea.
 For late I saw adrift disjointed planks,
 And empty tombs erected on the banks.
 Nor let false hopes to trust betray thy mind,
 Because my sire in caves constrains the wind, 30

Can with a breath a clamorous rage appease,
 They fear his whistle, and forsake the seas ;
 Not so, for, once indulged, they sweep the main,
 Deaf to the call, or, hearing, hear in vain ;
 But bent on mischief bear the waves before,
 And not content with seas insult the shore ;
 When ocean, air, and earth, at once engage,
 And rooted forests fly before their rage :
 At once the clashing clouds to battle move,
 And lightnings run across the fields above : 40
 I know them well, and marked their rude comport,
 While yet a child, within my father's court.

In times of tempest they command alone,
And he but sits precarious on the throne :
The more I know, the more my fears augment,

And fears are oft prophetic of the event.
But if not fears, or reasons will prevail,
If Fate has fixed thee obstinate to sail,
Go not without thy wife, but let me bear
My part of danger with an equal share, 50
And present, suffer what I only fear :
Then o'er the bounding billows shall we fly,
Secure to live together, or to die."
These reasons moved her starlike husband's heart.

But still he held his purpose to depart :
For as he loved her equal to his life,
He would not to the seas expose his wife ;
Nor could be wrought his voyage to refrain,
But sought by arguments to soothe her pain ;
Nor these availed ; at length he lights on
one, 60

With which so difficult a cause he won :
" My love, so short an absence cease to fear,
For, by my father's holy flame, I swear,
Before two moons their orb with light adorn,
If Heaven allow me life, I will return."

This promise of so short a stay prevails :
He soon equips the ship, supplies the sails,
And gives the word to launch ; she trembling views

This pomp of death, and parting tears renews ;

Last, with a kiss, she took a long farewell, 70
Sighed, with a sad presage, and swooning fell.

While Ceyx seeks delays, the lusty crew,
Raised on their banks, their oars in order drew

To their broad breasts, the ship with fury flew.

The queen, recovered, rears her humid eyes,

And first her husband on the poop espies,
Shaking his hand at distance on the main :
She took the sign, and shook her hand again.
Still as the ground recedes, retracts her view
With sharpened sight, till she no longer
knew 80

The much-loved face ; that comfort lost supplies

With less, and with the galley feeds her eyes ;
The galley borne from view by rising gales,
She followed with her sight the flying sails :
When even the flying sails were seen no more,

Forsaken of all sight, she left the shore.
Then on her bridal bed her body throws,
And sought in sleep her wearied eyes to close :

Her husband's pillow, and the widowed part
Which once he pressed, renewed the former smart. 90

And now a breeze from shore began to blow,

The sailors ship their oars, and cease to row ;
Then hoist their yards a-trip, and all their sails

Let fall to court the wind, and catch the gales :

By this the vessel half her course had run,
And as much rested till the rising sun ;
Both shores were lost to sight, when at the close

Of day, a stiffer gale at east arose :
The sea grew white, the rolling waves from far,

Like heralds, first denounce the watery war. 100

This seen, the master soon began to cry,
" Strike, strike the topsail ; let the mainsheet fly,

And furl your sails." The winds repel the sound,

And in the speaker's mouth the speech is drowned.

Yet of their own accord, as danger taught,
Each in his way, officiously they wrought ;
Some stow their oars, or stop the leaky sides
Another bolder yet the yard bestrides,
And folds the sails ; a fourth, with labour,
laves

The intruding seas, and waves ejects on waves. 110

In this confusion while their work they ply,

The winds augment the winter of the sky,

And wage intestine wars ; the suffering seas
Are tossed, and mingled as their tyrants
please.

The master would command, but, in despair
Of safety, stands amazed with stupid care,
Nor what to bid, or what forbid, he knows,
The ungoverned tempest to such fury
grows ;

Vain is his force, and vainer is his skill ;
With such a concourse comes the flood of
ill : 120

The cries of men are mixed with rattling
shrouds ;

Seas dash on seas, and clouds encounter
clouds :

At once from east to west, from pole to pole,
The fork lightning flash, the roaring
thunders roll.

Now waves on waves ascending scale the
skies,

And, in the fires above, the water fries :
When yellow sands are sifted from below,
The glittering billows give a golden show :
And when the fouler bottom spews the
black,

The Stygian dye the tainted waters take : 130
Then frothy white appear the flatted seas,
And change their colour, changing their
disease.

Like various fits the Trachin vessel finds,
And now sublime she rides upon the winds ;
As from a lofty summit looks from high,
And from the clouds beholds the nether sky ;
Now from the depth of hell they lift their
sight,

And at a distance see superior light :
The lashing billows make a loud report,
And beat her sides, as battering-rams a
fort : 140

Or as a lion, bounding in his way,
With force augmented bears against his
prey,
Sidelong to seize : or, unappalled with fear,
Springs on the toils, and rushes on the
spear :

So seas impelled by winds with added power
Assault the sides, and o'er the hatches
tower.

The planks, their pitchy coverings washed
away,

Now yield ; and now a yawning breach
display :

The roaring waters, with a hostile tide,
Rush through the ruins of her gaping side. 150
Meantime in sheets of rain the sky descends,
And ocean, swelled with waters, upwards
tends,

One rising, falling one ; the heavens and sea
Meet at their confines, in the middle way :
The sails are drunk with showers, and drop
with rain,

Sweet waters mingle with the briny main,
No star appears to lend his friendly light -
Darkness and tempest make a double night.
But flashing fires disclose the deep by turns,
And while the lightnings blaze, the water
burns. 160

Now all the waves their scattered force
unite,

And as a soldier foremost in the fight,
Makes way for others, and, an host alone,
Still presses on, and urging gains the town ;
So while the invading billows come abreast,
The hero tenth, advanced before the rest,
Sweeps all before him with impetuous sway,
And from the walls descends upon the prey ;
Part following enter, part remain without,
With envy hear their fellows' conquering
shout, 170
And mount on other's backs, in hope to
share

The city, thus become the seat of war.

An universal cry resounds aloud,
The sailors run in heaps, a helpless crowd ;
Art fails, and courage falls, no succour near ;
As many waves, as many deaths appear.

One weeps, and yet despairs of late relief ;
One cannot weep, his fears congeal his grief ;
But, stupid, with dry eyes expects his fate.
One with loud shrieks laments his lost
estate, 180

And calls those happy whom their funerals
wait.

This wretch with prayers and vows the gods
implores,
And even the skies he cannot see adores.

That other on his friends his thoughts bestows,
His careful father, and his faithful spouse.

The covetous worldling in his anxious mind
Thinks only on the wealth he left behind.

All Ceyx his Alcyone employs,
For her he grieves, yet in her absence joys :

His wife he wishes, and would still be near, 190

Not her with him, but wishes him with her :
Now with last looks he seeks his native shore,

Which fate has destined him to see no more ;
He sought, but in the dark tempestuous night

He knew not whither to direct his sight.
So whirl the seas, such darkness blinds the sky,

That the black night receives a deeper dye.
The giddy ship ran round ; the tempest tore

Her mast, and overboard the rudder bore,
One billow mounts ; and with a scornful brow, 200

Proud of her conquest gained, insults the waves below ;

Nor lighter falls, than if some giant tore
Pindus and Athos with the freight they bore,
And tossed on seas : pressed with the ponderous blow

Down sinks the ship within the abyss below :
Down with the vessel sink into the main
The many, never more to rise again.

Some few on scattered planks with fruitless care

Lay hold, and swim, but, while they swim, despair.

Even he, who late a sceptre did command, 210

Now grasps a floating fragment in his hand,
And while he struggles on the stormy main,
Invokes his father, and his wife, in vain ;
But yet his consort is his greater care ;
Alcyone he names amidst his prayer,
Names as a charm against the waves and wind ;

Most in his mouth, and ever in his mind :

Tired with his toil, all hopes of safety past,
From prayers to wishes he descends at last ;
That his dead body, wafted to the sands, 220
Might have its burial from her friendly hands.

As oft as he can catch a gulp of air,
And peep above the seas, he names the fair ;
And even when plunged beneath, on her he raves,

Murmuring Alcyone below the waves :
At last a falling billow stops his breath,
Breaks o'er his head, and whelms him underneath.

Bright Lucifer unlike himself appears
That night, his heavenly form obscured with tears ;

And since he was forbid to leave the skies, 230
He muffled with a cloud his mournful eyes.
Meantime Alcyone (his fate unknown)

Computes how many nights he had been gone ;
Observes the waning moon with hourly view ;

Numbers her age, and wishes for a new ;
Against the promised time provides with care,

And hastens in the woof the robes he was to wear :

And for herself employs another loom,
New dressed to meet her lord returning home,

Flattering her heart with joys that never were to come : 240

She fumed the temples with an odorous flame,

And oft before the sacred altars came,
To pray for him, who was an empty name.
All powers implored, but far above the rest,
To Juno she her pious vows addressed,
Her much-loved lord from perils to protect,
And safe o'er seas his voyage to direct :

Then prayed that she might still possess his heart,

And no pretending rival share a part. 250
This last petition heard of all her prayer,
The rest, dispersed by winds, were lost in air.

But she, the goddess of the nuptial bed,
Tired with her vain devotions for the dead,

Resolved the tainted hand should be re-
pelled,

Which incense offered, and her altar held :
Then Iris thus bespoke : "Thou faithful
maid,

By whom the queen's commands are well
conveyed,

Haste to the house of Sleep, and bid the
god,

Who rules the night by visions with a nod,
Prepare a dream, in figure and in form 260
Resembling him who perished in the storm :
This form, before Alcyone present,
To make her certain of the sad event."

Indued with robes of various hue she flies,
And flying draws an arch, (a segment of the
skies :)

Then leaves her bending bow, and from the
steep

Descends to search the silent house of Sleep.

Near the Cimmerians, in his dark abode,
Deep in a cavern, dwells the drowsy god ;
Whose gloomy mansion nor the rising
sun, 270

Nor setting, visits, nor the lightsome noon :
But lazy vapours round the region fly,
Perpetual twilight, and a doubtful sky ;
No crowing cock does there his wings dis-
play,

Nor with his horny bill provoke the day :
Nor watchful dogs, nor the more wakeful
geese,

Disturb with nightly noise the sacred peace :
Nor beast of nature, nor the tame, are
nigh,

Nor trees with tempests rocked, nor human
cry ;

But safe repose, without an air of breath, 280
Dwells here, and a dumb quiet next to
death.

An arm of Lethe, with a gentle flow,
Arising upwards from the rock below,
The palace moats, and o'er the pebbles
creeps,

And with soft murmurs calls the coming
sleeps ;

Around its entry nodding poppies grow,
And all cool simples that sweet rest bestow ;

Night from the plants their sleepy virtue
drains,

And passing sheds it on the silent plains :
No door there was the unguarded house to
keep, 290

On creaking hinges turned, to break his
sleep.

But in the gloomy court was raised a bed,
Stuffed with black plumes, and on an ebon
stead :

Black was the covering too, where lay the
god,

And slept supine, his limbs displayed
abroad :

About his head fantastic visions fly,
Which various images of things supply,
And mock their forms ; the leaves on trees
not more,

Nor bearded ears in fields, nor sands upon
the shore.

The virgin entering bright indulged the
day 300

To the brown cave, and brushed the dreams
away :

The god, disturbed with this new glare of
light

Cast sudden on his face, unsealed his sight,
And raised his tardy head, which sunk
again,

And sinking on his bosom knocked his
chin :

At length shook off himself ; and asked the
dame,

(And asking yawned) for what intent she
came ?

To whom the goddess thus : "O sacred
Rest,

Sweet pleasing Sleep, of all the Powers the
best !

O peace of mind, repairer of decay, 310
Whose balms renew the limbs to labours
of the day,

Care shuns thy soft approach, and sullen
flies away !

Adorn a dream, expressing human form,
The shape of him who suffered in the storm,
And send it flitting to the Trachin court,
The wreck of wretched Ceyx to report :

Before his queen bid the pale spectre stand,
Who begs a vain relief at Juno's hand."

She said, and scarce awake her eyes could
keep,

Unable to support the fumes of sleep : 320
But fled, returning by the way she went,
And swerved along her bow with swift
ascent.

The god, uneasy till he slept again,
Resolved at once to rid himself of pain ;
And, though against his custom, called
aloud,

Exciting Morpheus from the sleepy crowd :
Morpheus of all his numerous train ex-
pressed

The shape of man, and imitated best ;
The walk, the words, the gesture could
supply,

The habit mimic, and the mien belie ; 330
Plays well, but all his action is confined ;
Extending not beyond our human kind.

Another birds, and beasts, and dragons
apes,

And dreadful images, and monster shapes :
This dæmon, Icelos, in heaven's high hall
The gods have named ; but men Phobeter
call :

A third is Phantasus, whose actions roll
On meander thoughts, and things devoid of
soul ;

Earth, fruits, and flowers, he represents in
dreams,

And solid rocks unmoved, and running
streams : 340

These three to kings and chiefs their scenes
display,

The rest before the ignoble commons play :
Of these the chosen Morpheus is dispatched :
Which done, the lazy monarch, over-
watched,

Down from his propping elbow drops his
head,

Dissolved in sleep, and shrinks within his
bed.

Darkling the dæmon glides, for flight
prepared,

So soft that scarce his fanning wings are
heard.

To Trachin, swift as thought, the flitting
shade

Through air his momentary journey
made : 350

Then lays aside the steerage of his wings,
Forsakes his proper form, assumes the
king's ;

And pale as death, despoiled of his array,
Into the queen's apartment takes his way,
And stands before the bed at dawn of day :
Unmoved his eyes, and wet his beard
appears ;

And shedding vain, but seeming real tears ;
The briny water dropping from his hairs ;
Then staring on her, with a ghastly look
And hollow voice, he thus the queen be-
spoke : 360

"Know'st thou not me? Not yet, un-
happy wife?

Or are my features perished with my life?
Look once again, and for thy husband lost,
Lo ! all that's left of him, thy husband's
ghost !

Thy vows for my return were all in vain ;
The stormy south o'ertook us in the main ;
And never shalt thou see thy loving lord
again.

Bear witness, Heaven, I called on thee in
death,

And while I called, a billow stopped my
breath : 370

Think not that flying fame reports my fate ;
I present, I appear, and my own wreck
relate.

Rise, wretched widow, rise, nor undeplord
Permit my ghost to pass the Stygian ford :
But rise, prepared, in black, to mourn thy
perished lord."

Thus said the player god ; and adding art
Of voice and gesture, so performed his part,
She thought (so like her love the shade
appears)

That Ceyx spake the words, and Ceyx shed
the tears.

She groaned, her inward soul with grief
oppressed,

She sighed, she wept ; and sleeping beat
her breast : 380

Then stretched her arms to embrace his
body bare,

Her clasping arms inclose but empty air :
At this not yet awake she cried, " Oh, stay,
One is our fate, and common is our way !"
So dreadful was the dream, so loud she
spoke,

That starting sudden up, the slumber broke :
Then cast her eyes around, in hope to view
Her vanished lord, and find the vision true :
For now the maids, who waited her com-
mands,

Ran in with lighted tapers in their hands. 390
Tired with the search, not finding what she
seeks,

With cruel blows she pounds her blubbered
cheeks ;

Then from her beaten breast the linen tare,
And cut the golden caul that bound her hair :
Her nurse demands the cause ; with louder
cries

She prosecutes her griefs, and thus replies :
" No more Alcyone, she suffered death
With her loved lord, when Ceyx lost his
breath :

No flattery, no false comfort, give me none,
My shipwrecked Ceyx is for ever gone : 400
I saw, I saw him manifest in view,
His voice, his figure, and his gestures knew :
His lustre lost, and every living grace,
Yet I retained the features of his face ;

Though with pale cheeks, wet beard, and
dropping hair,

None but my Ceyx could appear so fair :
I would have strained him with a strict
embrace,

But through my arms he slipped, and van-
ished from the place :

There, even just there, he stood ;" and as she
spoke,

Where last the spectre was, she cast her
look : 410

Fain would she hope, and gazed upon the
ground,

If any printed footsteps might be found.

Then sighed and said : " This I too well
foreknew,

And my prophetic fear presaged too true ;

'Twas what I begged, when with a bleeding
heart

I took my leave, and suffered thee to part,
Or I to go along, or thou to stay,
Never, ah, never to divide our way !

Happier for me, that all our hours assigned
Together we had lived ; even not in death
disjoined ! 420

So had my Ceyx still been living here,
Or with my Ceyx I had perished there :
Now I die absent, in the vast profound ;
And me without myself the seas have
drowned :

The storms were not so cruel ; should I
strive

To lengthen life, and such a grief survive ;
But neither will I strive, nor wretched thee
In death forsake, but keep thee company.

If not one common sepulchre contains
Our bodies, or one urn our last remains, 430
Yet Ceyx and Alcyone shall join,
Their names remembered in one common
line."

No farther voice her mighty grief affords,
For sighs come rushing in betwixt her words,
And stopped her tongue ; but what her
tongue denied,

Soft tears, and groans, and dumb complaints
supplied.

'Twas morning ; to the port she takes her
way,

And stands upon the margin of the sea :
That place, that very spot of ground she
sought,

Or thither by her destiny was brought, 440
Where last he stood : and while she sadly
said,

" 'Twas here he left me, lingering here
delayed .

His parting kiss ; and there his anchors
weighed ;"

Thus speaking, while her thoughts past
actions trace,

And call to mind, admonished by the place,
Sharp at her utmost ken she cast her eyes,
And somewhat floating from afar descries ;
It seemed a corpse adrift, to distant sight,
But at a distance who could judge aright ?

It wafted nearer yet, and then she knew 450
That what before she but surmised, was true:
A corpse it was, but whose it was, unknown,
Yet moved, howe'er, she made the case her
own :

Took the bad omen of a shipwrecked man,
As for a stranger wept, and thus began :

" Poor wretch, on stormy seas to lose thy
life,

Unhappy thou, but more thy widowed wife !"
At this she paused ; for now the flowing tide
Had brought the body nearer to the side :
The more she looks, the more her fears in-
crease 460

At nearer sight ; and she's herself the less :
Now driven ashore, and at her feet it lies,
She knows too much, in knowing whom she
sees :

Her husband's corpse ; at this she loudly
shrieks.

" 'Tis he, 'tis he," she cries, and tears her
cheeks,

Her hair, her vest, and stooping to the sands,
About his neck she cast her trembling hands.

" And is it thus, O dearer than my life,
Thus, thus return'st thou to thy longing
wife !"

She said, and to the neighbouring mole she
strode, 470

(Raised there to break the incursions of the
flood ;)

Headlong from thence to plunge herself she
springs,

But shoots along supported on her wings ;
A bird new made about the banks she plies,
Not far from shore ; and short excursions
tries ;

Nor seeks in air her humble flight to raise,
Content to skim the surface of the seas ;

Her bill, though slender, sends a creaking
noise,

And imitates a lamentable voice :
Now lighting where the bloodless body
lies, 480

She with a funeral note renews her cries,
At all her stretch her little wings she spread,
And with her feathered arms embraced the
dead :

Then flickering to his pallid lips, she strove
To print a kiss, the last essay of love :
Whether the vital touch revived the dead,
Or that the moving waters raised his head
To meet the kiss, the vulgar doubt alone ;
For sure a present miracle was shown.

The gods their shapes to winter-birds trans-
late, 490

But both obnoxious to their former fate.
Their conjugal affection still is tied,
And still the mournful race is multiplied ;
They bill, they tread ; Alcyone compressed
Seven days sits brooding on her floating
nest :

A wintry queen : her sire at length is kind,
Calms every storm, and hushes every wind :
Prepares his empire for his daughter's ease,
And for his hatching nephews smooths the
seas.

ÆSACUS TRANSFORMED INTO A CORMORANT.

FROM THE ELEVENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

THESE some old man sees wanton in the air,
And praises the unhappy constant pair.

Then to his friend the long-necked cormo-
rant shows,

The former tale reviving others' woes :
" That sable bird," he cries, " which cuts the
flood

With slender legs, was once of royal blood ;
His ancestors from mighty Trés proceed,
The brave Laomedon, and Ganymede,
(Whose beauty tempted Jove to steal the
boy)

And Priam, hapless prince ! who fell with
Troy : 10

Himself was Hector's brother, and had fate
But given this hopeful youth a longer date,
Perhaps had rivalled warlike Hector's worth,
Though on the mother's side of mœnace
birth ;

Fair Alyxothoe, a country maid,
 Bare Æsacus by stealth in Ida's shade.
 He fled the noisy town, and pompous
 court,
 Loved the lone hills, and simple rural sport,
 And seldom to the city would resort.
 Yet he no rustic clownishness professed, 20
 Nor was soft love a stranger to his breast :
 The youth had long the nymph Hesperia
 wooed,
 Oft through the thicket, or the mead pur-
 sued :
 Her haply on her father's bank he spied,
 While fearless she her silver tresses dried ;
 Away she fled : not stags with half such
 speed,
 Before the prowling wolf, scud o'er the
 mead ;
 Not ducks, when they the safer flood for-
 sake,
 Pursued by hawks, so swift regain the lake.
 As fast he followed in the hot career ; 30
 Desire the lover winged, the virgin fear.
 A snake unseen now pierced her heedless
 foot ;
 Quick through the veins the venom'd juices
 shoot :
 She fell, and 'scaped by death his fierce pur-
 suit.
 Her lifeless body, frightened, he embraced,
 And cried, "Not this I dreaded, but thy
 haste :
 Oh, had my love been less, or less thy fear !
 The victory thus bought is far too dear.
 Accurs'd snake ! yet I more curs'd than he !
 He gave the wound ; the cause was given by
 me. 40
 Yet none shall say, that unrevenged you
 died."
 He spoke ; then climbed a cliff's o'erhang-
 ing side,
 And, resolute, leaped on the foaming tide.
 Thetys received him gently on the wave ;
 The death he sought denied, and feathers
 gave.
 Debarred the surest remedy of grief,
 And forced to live, he curs'd the unasked
 relief.

Then on his airy pinions upward flies,
 And at a second fall successful tries :
 The downy plume a quick descent denies, 50
 Enraged, he often dives beneath the wave :
 And there in vain expects to find a grave,
 His ceaseless sorrow for the unhappy maid
 Meagred his look, and on his spirits preyed.
 Still near the sounding deep he lives ; his
 name
 From frequent diving and emerging came.

FROM THE TWELFTH BOOK

OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

CONNECTION TO THE END OF THE
ELEVENTH BOOK.

Æsacus, the son of Priam, loving a country life,
 forsakes the court : living obscurely, he falls in
 love with a nymph ; who, flying from him, was
 killed by a serpent ; for grief of this, he would
 have drowned himself ; but, by the pity of the
 gods, is turned into a Cormorant. Priam, not
 hearing of Æsacus, believes him to be dead,
 and raises a tomb to preserve his memory.
 By this transition, which is one of the finest in
 all Ovid, the poet naturally falls into the story
 of the Trojan war, which is summed up, in the
 present book, but so very briefly, in many
 places, that Ovid seems more short than
 Virgil, contrary to his usual style. Yet the
 House of Fame, which is here described, is
 one of the most beautiful pieces in the whole
 Metamorphoses.

PRIAM, to whom the story was unknown,
 As dead, deplored his metamorphosed son :
 A cenotaph his name and title kept,
 And Hector round the tomb, with all his
 brothers, wept.
 This pious office Paris did not share ;
 Absent alone and author of the war,
 Which, for the Spartan queen, the Grecians
 drew
 To avenge the rape, and Asia to subdue.
 A thousand ships were manned, to sail the
 sea :
 Nor had their just resentments found
 delay, 10
 Had not the winds and waves opposed their
 way.

At Aulis, with united powers, they meet ;
But there, cross winds or calms detained the
fleet.

Now, while they raise an altar on the shore,
And Jove with solemn sacrifice adore ;
A boding sign the priests and people see :
A snake of size immense ascends a tree,
And in the leafy summit spied a nest,
Which, o'er her callow young, a sparrow
pressed.

Eight were the birds unfledged ; their mother
flew, 20

And hovered round her care ; but still in
view :

Till the fierce reptile first devoured the
brood ;

Then seized the fluttering dam, and drank
her blood.

This dire oment the fearful people view ;
Calchas alone, by Phœbus taught, foreknew
What Heaven decreed : and with a smiling
glance,

Thus gratulates to Greece her happy chance :
" O Argives, we shall conquer ; Troy is ours,
But long delays shall first afflict our powers :
Nine years of labour the nine birds port-
end ; 30

The tenth shall in the town's destruction
end."

The serpent, who his maw obscene had
filled,

The branches in his curled embraces held :
But as in spires he stood, he turned to stone :
The stony snake retained the figure still his
own.

Yet not for this the wind-bound navy
weighed ;
Slack were their sails ; and Neptune dis-
obeyed.

Some thought him loth the town should be
destroyed,

Whose building had his hands divine em-
ployed :

Not so the seer ; who knew, and known
foreshowed, 40

The virgin Phœbe with a virgin's blood
Must first be reconciled ; the common cause
Prevailed ; and pity yielding to the laws,

Fair Iphigenia, the devoted maid,
Was, by the weeping priests, in linen robes
arrayed,

All mourn her fate ; but no relief appeared :
The royal victim bound, the knife already
reared :

When that offended Power, who caused
their woe,

Relenting ceased her wrath ; and stopped
the coming blow.

A mist before the ministers she cast ; 50
And, in the virgin's room, a hind she placed.
The oblation slain, and Phœbe reconciled,
The storm was hushed, and dimpled ocean
smiled :

A favourable gale arose from shore,
Which to the port desired the Grecian galleys
bore.

Full in the midst of this created space,
Betwixt heaven, earth, and skies, there
stands a place

Confining on all three ; with triple bound ;
Whence all things, though remote, are
viewed around,

And thither bring their undulating sound. 60
The palace of loud Fame ; her seat of
power ;

Placed on the summit of a lofty tower.
A thousand winding entries, long and wide,
Receive of fresh reports a flowing tide.

A thousand crannies in the walls are made ;
Nor gate nor bars exclude the busy trade.

'Tis built of brass, the better to diffuse
The spreading sounds, and multiply the
news ;

Where echoes in repeated echoes play :
A mart for ever full, and open night and
day.

Nor silence is within, nor voice express, 70
But a deaf noise of sounds that never
cease ;

Confused, and chiding, like the hollow roar
Of tides, receding from the insulted shore :
Or like the broken thunder, heard from far,
When Jove to distance drives the rolling
war.

The courts are filled with a tumultuous din
Of crowds, or issuing forth, or entering in :

A thoroughfare of news : where some devise
Things never heard ; some mingle truth with
lies : 80

The troubled air with empty sounds they
beat ;

Intent to hear, and eager to repeat.

Error sits brooding there ; with added train
Of vain Credulity, and Joys as vain :
Suspicion, with Sedition joined, are near ;
And rumours raised, and murmurs mixed,
and panic fear.

Fame sits aloft ; and sees the subject ground,
And seas about, and skies above ; enquiring
all around.

The goddess gives the alarm ; and soon
is known

The Grecian fleet, descending on the town. 90
Fixed on defence, the Trojans are not
slow

To guard their shore from an expected
foe.

They meet in fight : by Hector's fatal hand
Protesilaus falls, and bites the strand,
Which with expense of blood the Grecians
won ;

And proved the strength unknown of Priam's
son,

And to their cost the Trojan leaders felt
The Grecian heroes, and what deaths they
dealt.

From these first onsets, the Sigæan shore
Was strewn with carcasses, and stained with
gore : 100

Neptunian Cygnus troops of Greeks had
slain ;

Achilles in his car had scoured the plain,
And cleared the Trojan ranks : where'er he
fought,

Cygnus, or Hector, through the fields he
sought :

Cygnus he found ; on him his force essayed :
For Hector was to the tenth year delayed.
His white-maned steeds, that bowed beneath
the yoke,

He cheered to courage, with a gentle stroke ;
Then urged his fiery chariot on the foe :

And rising shook his lance, in act to
throw. 110

But first he cried, "O youth, be proud to
bear

Thy death, ennobled by Pelides' spear."

The lance pursued the voice without delay ;
Nor did the whizzing weapon miss the
way,

But pierced his cuirass, with such fury sent ;
And signed his bosom with a purple dint.
At this the seed of Neptune : "Goddess-
born,

For ornament, not use, these arms are worn ;
This helm, and heavy buckler, I can spare,
As only decorations of the war : 120

So Mars is armed for glory, not for need.

'Tis somewhat more from Neptune to pro-
ceed,

Than from a daughter of the sea to spring :
Thy sire is mortal ; mine is Ocean's king.

Secure of death, I should condemn thy dart,
Though naked, and impassible depart."

He said, and threw ; the trembling weapon
passed

Through nine bull-hides, each under other
placed,

On his broad shield, and stuck within the
last.

Achilles wrenched it out ; and sent again 130
The hostile gift : the hostile gift was vain.

He tried a third, a tough well-chosen spear ;
The inviolable body stood sincere,

Though Cygnus then did no defence
provide,

But scornful offered his unshielded side.

Not otherwise the impatient hero fared,
Than as a bull, encompassed with a guard,
Amid the circus roars : provoked from far,

By sight of scarlet, and a sanguine war :
They quit their ground ; his bended horns
elude ; 140

In vain pursuing, and in vain pursued.

Before to farther fight he would advance,
He stood considering, and surveyed his
lance.

Doubts if he wielded not a wooden spear
Without a point : he looked, the point was
there.

"This is my hand, and this my lance," he
said,

"By which so many thousand foes are dead.

Oh, whither is their usual virtue fled !

I had it once : and the Lyrnessian wall,
And Tenedos confessed it in their fall. 150

Thy streams, Caicus, rolled a crimson flood ;

And Thebes ran red with her own natives' blood.

Twice Telephus employed their piercing steel,

To wound him first, and afterward to heal.

The vigour of this arm was never vain :

And that my wonted prowess I retain,
Witness these heaps of slaughter on the plain.'

He said, and, doubtful of his former deeds,

To some new trial of his force proceeds,

He chose Menætes from among the rest ; 160

At him he launched his spear, and pierced his breast :

On the hard earth the Lycian knocked his head,

And lay supine ; and forth the spirit fled.

Then thus the hero : " Neither can I blame

The hand, or javelin ; both are still the same.

The same I will employ against this foe ;

And wish but with the same success to throw."

So spoke the chief ; and while he spoke he threw ;

The weapon with unerring fury flew ;

At his left shoulder aimed : nor entrance found ; 170

But back, as from a rock, with swift rebound

Harmless returned : a bloody mark appeared,

Which with false joy the flattered hero cheered.

Wound there was none ; the blood that was in view,

The lance before from slain Menætes drew.

Headlong he leaps from off his lofty car,
And in close fight on foot renews the war.

Raging with high disdain repeats his blows ;

Nor shield nor armour can their force oppose ;

Huge cantlets of his buckler strew the ground, 180

And no defence in his bored arms is found.

But on his flesh no wound or blood is seen ;

The sword itself is blunted on the skin.

This vain attempt the chief no longer bears ;

But round his hollow temples and his ears

His buckler beats ; the son of Neptune, stunned

With these repeated buffets, quits his ground ;

A sickly sweat succeeds, and shades of night ;

Inverted nature swims before his sight :

The insulting victor presses on the more, 190

And treads the steps the vanquished trod before,

Nor rest nor respite gives. A stone there lay

Behind his trembling foe, and stopped his way :

Achilles took the advantage which he found,

O'er-turned, and pushed him backward on the ground.

His buckler held him under, while he pressed,

With both his knees above, his panting breast :

Unlaced his helm : about his chin the twist

He tied ; and soon the strangled soul dismissed.

With eager haste he went to strip the dead ; 200

The vanquished body from his arms was fled.

His sea-god sire, to immortalise his fame,
Had turned it to the bird that bears his
name.

A truce succeeds the labours of this
day,
And arms suspended with a long delay.
While Trojan walls are kept with watch
and ward;

The Greeks before their trenches mount
the guard.

The feast approached; when to the blue-
eyed maid

His vows for Cygnus slain the victor paid,
And a white heifer on her altar laid. 210
The reeking entrails on the fire they threw;
And to the gods the grateful odour flew:
Heaven had its part in sacrifice: the rest
Was broiled and roasted for the future
feast.

The chief invited guests were set around:
And, hunger first assuaged, the bowls were
crowned.

Which in deep draughts their cares and
labours drowned.

The mellow harp did not their ears em-
ploy:

And mute was all the warlike symphony.
Discourse, the food of souls, was their
delight, 220

And pleasing chat prolonged the summer's
night.

The subject, deeds of arms; and valour
shown,

Or on the Trojan side, or on their own.
Of dangers undertaken, fame achieved,
They talked by turns; the talk by turns re-
lieved.

What things but these could fierce Achilles
tell,

Or what could fierce Achilles hear so well?
The last great act performed, of Cygnus
slain,

Did most the martial audience entertain;
Wondering to find a body, free by fate 230
From steel, and which could even that steel
rebat:

Amazed, their admiration they renew;
And scarce Pelides could believe it true.

THE SPEECHES OF AJAX AND ULYSSES.

FROM THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.*

THE chiefs were set, the soldiers crowned
the field:

To these the master of the seven-fold shield
Upstart fierce: and kindled with disdain,
Eager to speak, unable to contain
His boiling rage, he rolled his eyes around
The shore, and Grecian galleys haled
aground.

Then stretching out his hands, "O Jove,"
he cried,

"Must then our cause before the fleet be
tried?

And dares Ulysses for the prize contend,
In sight of what he durst not once de-
fend? 10

But basely fled, that memorable day,
When I from Hector's hands redeemed the
flaming prey.

So much 'tis safer at the noisy bar
With words to flourish, than engage in war.
By different methods we maintained our
right,

Nor am I made to talk, nor he to fight.

* The *Metamorphoses* (as well as the *Fæsti* of Ovid) have preserved, it must be owned, many curious particulars of ancient history, philosophy, and mythology. For Ovid was a great and learned antiquarian, which, from the levity and sportiveness of some of his poems, one would not suspect. An old French translator of Ovid, Thomas Vallois, called the *Metamorphoses* the Bible of the poets; his work was printed at Paris, in black letter, 1523. The Abbé Banier published a magnificent edition in 4to. 4 vols. 1767, with historical and mythological illustrations.—Benserade made a kind of travestie of Ovid in *Rondeaux*, printed in 4to. with beautiful sculptures. The Abbé Bellegarde translated at the same time Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the pious Thomas à Kempis. Perhaps he was ordered by his confessor to undertake the latter work as an act of penance; as Dryden was ordered by his confessor to write "The Hind and Panther," as an expiation for having written "The Spanish Friar."—Dr. JOSEPH WARTON,

In bloody fields I labour to be great ;
His arms are a smooth tongue, and soft
deceit.

Nor need I speak my deeds, for those you
see ;

The sun and day are witnesses for me. 20
Let him who fights unseen relate his own,
And vouch the silent stars, and conscious
moon.

Great is the prize demanded, I confess,
But such an abject rival makes it less.
That gift, those honours, he but hoped to
gain,

Can leave no room for Ajax to be vain :
Losing he wins, because his name will be
Ennobled by defeat, who durst contend
with me.

Were mine own valour questioned, yet my
blood

Without that plea would make my title
good : 30

My sire was Telamon, whose arms, em-
ployed

With Hercules, these Trojan walls de-
stroyed ;

And who before, with Jason, sent from
Greece,

In the first ship brought home the golden
fleece :

Great Telamon from Æacus derives
His birth (the inquisitor of guilty lives

In shades below ; where Sisypheus, whose
son

This thief is thought, rolls up the restless
heavy stone,)

Just Æacus the king of gods above

Begot : thus Ajax is the third from Jove. 40

Nor should I seek advantage from my
line,

Unless (Achilles) it were mixed with thine :
As next of kin Achilles' arms I claim ;

This fellow would ingraft a foreign name
Upon our stock, and the Sisyphian seed
By fraud and theft asserts his father's
breed.

Then must I lose these arms, because I
came

To fight uncalled, a voluntary name?

Nor shunned the cause, but offered you my
aid,

While he long lurking was to war be-
trayed: 50

Forced to the field he came, but in the rear ;
And feigned distraction to conceal his fear :
Till one more cunning caught him in the
snare,

(Ill for himself) and dragged him into war.
Now let a hero's arms a coward vest,

And he, who shunned all honours, gain the
best ;

And let me stand excluded from my right,
Robbed of my kinsman's arms, who first
appeared in fight.

Better for us, at home he had remained,
Had it been true the madness which he
feigned, 60

Or so believed ; the less had been our
shame,

The less his counselled crime, which brands
the Grecian name ;

Nor Philoctetes had been left inclosed

In a bare isle, to wants and pains exposed,
Where to the rocks, with solitary groans,

His sufferings and our baseness he be-
moans ;

And wishes (so may Heaven his wish fulfil)
The due reward to him who caused his ill.

Now he, with us to Troy's destruction
sworn,

Our brother of the war, by whom are
borne 70

Alcides' arrows, pent in narrow bounds,
With cold and hunger pinched, and pained
with wounds,

To find him food and clothing, must employ
Against the birds the shafts due to the fate

of Troy.

Yet still he lives, and lives from treason
free,

Because he left Ulysses' company :

Poor Palamede might wish, so void of aid
Rather to have been left, than so to death
betrayed.

The coward bore the man immortal spite,
Who shamed him out of madness into
fight : 80

Nor daring otherwise to vent his hate,
Accused him first of treason to the state ;
And then, for proof, produced the golden
store

Himself had hidden in his tent before :
Thus of two champions he deprived our
host,

By exile one, and one by treason lost.
Thus fights Ulysses, thus his fame extends,
A formidable man, but to his friends :
Great, for what greatness is in words and
sound :

Even faithful Nestor less in both is
found : 90

But that he might without a rival reign,
He left his faithful Nestor on the plain ;
Forsook his friend even at his utmost need.
Who tired and tardy, with his wounded
steed,

Cried out for aid, and called him by his
name ;

But cowardice has neither ears nor shame :
Thus fled the good old man, bereft of aid,
And, for as much as lay in him, betrayed.

That this is not a fable forged by me,
Like one of his, an Ulyssean lie, 100

I vouch even Diomed, who, though his
friend,

Cannot that act excuse, much less defend :
He called him back aloud, and taxed his
fear ;

And sure enough he heard, but durst not
hear.

"The gods with equal eyes on mortals
look ;

He justly was forsaken, who forsook :
Wanted that succour he refused to lend,
Found every fellow such another friend :
No wonder, if he roared that all might
hear,

His elocution was increased by fear : 110
I heard, I ran, I found him out of breath,
Pale, trembling, and half dead with fear of
death.

Though he had judged himself by his own
laws,

And stood condemned, I helped the common
cause :

With my broad buckler hid him from the
foe ;

(Even the shield trembled as he lay below ;)
And from impending fate the coward freed :
Good Heaven forgive me for so bad a deed !
If still he will persist, and urge the strife,
First let him give me back his forfeit
life ; 120

Let him return to that opprobrious field :
Again creep under my protecting shield :
Let him lie wounded, let the foe be near,
And let his quivering heart confess his fear ;
There put him in the very jaws of fate ;
And let him plead his cause in that estate :
And yet, when snatched from death, when
from below

My lifted shield I loosed, and let him go,
Good heavens, how light he rose, with what
a bound

He sprung from earth, forgetful of his
wound : 130

How fresh, how eager then his feet to ply ;
Who had not strength to stand, had speed
to fly !

"Hector came on, and brought the gods
along ;

Fear seized alike the feeble and the strong :
Each Greek was an Ulysses ; such a dread
Th' approach, and even the sound, of
Hector bred :

Him, fleshed with slaughter, and with con-
quest crowned,

I met, and overturned him to the ground.
When after, matchless as he deemed in
might,

He challenged all our host to single
fight, 140

All eyes were fixed on me : the lots were
thrown

But for your champion I was wished alone :
Your vows were heard, we fought, and
neither yield ;

Yet I returned unvanquished from the
field.

With Jove to friend th' insulting Trojan
came,

And menaced us with force, our fleet with
flame :

Was it the strength of this tongue-valiant lord,
 In that black hour, that saved you from the sword;
 Or was my breast exposed alone, to brave
 A thousand swords, a thousand ships to save? 150
 The hopes of your return! and can you yield,
 For a saved fleet, less than a single shield?
 Think it no boast, O Grecians, if I deem
 These arms want Ajax, more than Ajax them;
 Or, I with them an equal honour share;
 They honoured to be worn, and I to wear.
 Will he compare my courage with his flight?
 As well he may compare the day with night.
 Night is indeed the province of his reign:
 Yet all his dark exploits no more contain 160
 Than a spy taken, and a sleeper slain;
 A priest made prisoner, Pallas made a prey:
 But none of all these actions done by day:
 Nor aught of these was done, and Diomedé away,
 If on such petty merits you confer
 So vast a prize, let each his portion share;
 Make a just dividend: and if not all,
 The greater part to Diomedé will fall.
 But why for Ithacus such arms as those,
 Who naked and by night invades his foes? 170
 The glittering helm by moonlight will proclaim
 The latent robber, and prevent his game:
 Nor could he hold his tottering head upright
 Beneath that morion, or sustain the weight;
 Nor that right arm could toss the beamy lance;
 Much less the left that ampler shield advance:
 Ponderous with precious weight, and rough with cost
 Of the round world in rising gold embossed.

That orb would ill become his hand to wield,
 And look as for the gold he stole the shield; 180
 Which should your error on the wretch bestow,
 It would not frighten, but allure the foe:
 Why asks he what avails him not in fight,
 And would but cumber and retard his flight,
 In which his only excellence is placed?
 You give him death, that intercept his haste.
 Add, that his own is yet a maiden-shield,
 Nor the least dint has suffered in the field,
 Guiltless of fight: mine battered, hewed, and bored,
 Worn out of service, must forsake his lord. 190
 What farther need of words our right to scan?
 My arguments are deeds; let action speak the man.
 Since from a champion's arms the strife arose,
 So cast the glorious prize amid the foes;
 Then send us to redeem both arms and shield,
 And let him wear who wins them in the field."
 He said: a murmur from the multitude,
 Or somewhat like a stifled shout, ensued:
 Till from his seat arose Laertes' son,
 Looked down awhile, and paused ere he begun; 200
 Then to the expecting audience raised his look,
 And not without prepared attention spoke:
 Soft was his tone, and sober was his face;
 Action his words, and words his action grace.
 "If Heaven, my lords, had heard our common prayer,
 These arms had caused no quarrel for an heir;
 Still great Achilles had his own possessed,
 And we with great Achilles had been blessed.

But since hard fate, and Heaven's severe
decree,

Have ravished him away from you and
me," 210

(At this he sighed, and wiped his eyes, and
drew,

Or seemed to draw, some drops of kindly
dew,)

"Who better can succeed Achilles lost,
Than he who gave Achilles to your host?

This only I request, that neither he
May gain, by being what he seems to be,
A stupid thing, nor I may lose the prize,
By having sense, which Heaven to him
denies :

Since, great or small, the talent I enjoyed
Was ever in the common cause em-
ployed : 220

Nor let my wit, and wonted eloquence,
Which often has been used in your defence
And in my own, this only time be brought
To bear against myself, and deemed a
fault.

Make not a crime, where Nature made it
none ;

For every man may freely use his own.
The deeds of long-descended ancestors
Are but by grace of imputation ours,
Theirs in effect : but since he draws his line
From Jove, and seems to plead a right
divine ; 230

From Jove, like him, I claim my pedigree,
And am descended in the same degree.

My sire Laertes was Arcesius' heir,
Arcesius was the son of Jupiter :

No parricide, no banished man, is known
In all my line : let him excuse his own.
Hermes ennobles too my mother's side,
By both my parents to the gods allied ;
But not because that on the female part
My blood is better, dare I claim descent, 240

Or that my sire from parricide is free,
But judge by merit betwixt him and me :
The prize be to the best ; provided yet,
That Ajax for a while his kin forget,
And his great sire, and greater uncle's
name,

To fortify by them his feeble claim :

Be kindred and relation laid aside,
And honour's cause by laws of honour
tried.

For, if he plead proximity of blood,
That empty title is with ease withstood. 250
Peleus, the hero's sire, more nigh than he,
And Pyrrhus his undoubted progeny,
Inherit first these trophies of the field ;
To Scyros, or to Phthia, send the shield :
And Teucer has an uncle's right ; yet he
Waves his pretensions, nor contends with
me.

"Then, since the cause on pure desert is
placed,

Whence shall I take my rise, what reckon
last ?

I not presume on every act to dwell,
But take these few, in order as they fell. 260

"Thetis, who knew the Fates, applied her
care

To keep Achilles in disguise from war ;
And till the threatening influence were
past,

A woman's habit on the hero cast :
All eyes were cozened by the borrowed
vest,

And Ajax (never wiser than the rest)
Found no Pelides there : at length I came
With proffered wares to this pretended
dame ;

She, not discovered by her mien or voice,
Betrayed her manhood by her manly
choice ; 270

And while on female toys her fellows look,
Grasped in her warlike hand, a javelin
shook ;

Whom, by this act revealed, I thus be-
spoke :

O goddess-born ! resist not Heaven's decree,
The fall of Ilium is reserved for thee ;
Then seized him, and, produced in open
light,

Sent blushing to the field the fatal knight.
Mine then are all his actions of the war ;
Great Telephus was conquered by my spear,
And after cured : to me the Thebans
owe, 280

Lesbos and Tenedos, their overthrow ;

Scyros and Cylla : not on all to dwell,
By me Lyrnesus and strong Chrysa fell :
And since I sent the man who Hector slew,
To me the noble Hector's death is due :
Those arms I put into his living hand,
Those arms, Pelides dead, I now demand.

" When Greece was injured in the Spartan prince,

And met at Aulis to revenge the offence,
'Twas a dead calm, or adverse blasts, that reigned, 290

And in the port the wind-bound fleet detained :

Bad signs were seen, and oracles severe
Were daily thundered in our general's ear :
That by his daughter's blood we must at-
pease

Diana's kindled wrath, and free the seas.
Affection, interest, fame, his heart assailed ;
But soon the father o'er the king prevailed ;
Bold, on himself he took the pious crime,
As angry with the gods, as they with him.
No subject could sustain their sovereign's
look, 300

'Till this hard enterprise I undertook :
I only durst th' imperial power control,
And undermined the parent in his soul ;
Forced him to exert the king for common
good,

And pay our ransom with his daughter's
blood.

Never was cause more difficult to plead,
Than where the judge against himself de-
creed :

Yet this I won by dint of argument ;
The wrongs his injured brother underwent,
And his own office, shamed him to con-
sent. 310

" 'Twas harder yet to move the mother's
mind,

And to this heavy task was I designed :
Reasons against her love I knew were vain :
I circumvented whom I could not gain :
Had Ajax been employed, our slackened sails
Had still at Aulis waited happy gales.

" Arrived at Troy, your choice was fixed
on me,

A fearless envoy, fit for a bold embassy :

Secure, I entered through the hostile court,
Glittering with steel, and crowded with
resort : 330

There, in the midst of arms, I plead our
cause,

Urge the foul rape, and violated laws ;
Accuse the foes, as authors of the strife,
Reproach the ravisher, demand the wife.
Priam, Antenor, and the wiser few,
I moved ; but Paris and his lawless crew
Scarce held their hands, and lifted swords ;
but stood

In act to quench their impious thirst of
blood :

This Menelaus knows ; exposed to share
With me the rough prelude of the war. 330

" Endless it were to tell what I have done,
In arms, or counsel, since the siege begun.
The first encounters past, the foe repelled,
They skulked within the town, we kept the
field.

War seemed asleep for nine long years ; at
length,

Both sides resolved to push, we tried our
strength.

Now what did Ajax while our arms took
breath,

Versed only in the gross mechanic trade of
death ?

If you require my deeds, with ambushed
arms

I trapped the foe, or tired with false
alarms ; 340

Secured the ships, drew lines along the plain,
The fainting cheered, chastised the rebel
train,

Provided forage, our spent arms renewed ;
Employed at home, or sent abroad, the com-
mon cause pursued.

" The king, deluded in a dream by Jove
Despaired to take the town, and ordered to
remove.

What subject durst arraign the power
supreme,

Producing Jove to justify his dream.
Ajax might wish the soldiers to retain
From shameful flight, but wishes were in
vain ; 350

As wanting of effect had been his words,
Such as of course his thundering tongue
affords.

But did this boaster threaten, did he pray,
Or by his own example urge their stay?
None, none of these, but ran himself away.
I saw him run, and was ashamed to see;
Who plied his feet so fast to get aboard as
he?

Then speeding through the place, I made
a stand,

And loudly cried, O base degenerate band,
To leave a town already in your hand! 360
After so long expense of blood, for fame,
To bring home nothing but perpetual
shame!

These words, or what I have forgotten since,
(For grief inspired me then with eloquence)
Reduced their minds; they leave the crowded
port,

And to their late forsaken camp resort;
Dismayed the council met: this man was
there,

But mute, and not recovered of his fear:
Thersites taxed the king, and loudly railed,
But his wide opening mouth with blows I
sealed. 370

Then, rising, I excite their souls to fame,
And kindle sleeping virtue into flame;
From thence, whatever he performed in
fight

Is justly mine, who drew him back from
flight,

"Which of the Grecian chiefs consorts
with thee?

But Diomedes desires my company,
And still communicates his praise with me.
As guided by a god, secure he goes,
Armed with my fellowship, amid the foes:
And sure no little merit I may boast, 380
Whom such a man selects from such a host;
Unforced by lots I went without affright,
To dare with him the dangers of the night:
On the same errand sent, we met the spy
Of Hector, double-tongued, and used to lie:
Him I despatched, but not till, undermined,
I drew him first to tell what treacherous
Troy designed:

My task performed, with praise I had retired,
But not content with this, to greater praise
aspired;

Invaded Rhoesus, and his Thracian crew, 390
And him, and his, in their own strength, I
slew;

Returned a victor, all my vows complete,
With the king's chariot, in his royal seat:
Refuse me now his arms, whose fiery steeds
Were promised to the spy for his nocturnal
deeds;

And let dull Ajax bear away my right,
When all his days outbalance this onenight.

"Nor fought I darkling still: the sun
beheld

With slaughtered Lycians when I strewed
the field:

You saw, and counted as I passed along, 400
Alastor, Cromius, Ceranos the strong,
Alcander, Prytanis, and Halius,
Noemon, Charopes, and Ennomus,
Choon, Chersidamas; and five beside,
Men of obscure descent, but courage tried:
All these this hand laid breathless on the
ground;

Nor want I proofs of many a manly wound:
All honest, all before: believe not me;
Words may deceive, but credit what you
see,"

At this he bared his breast, and showed
his scars, 410

As of a furrowed field, well ploughed with
wars:

"Nor is this part unexercised," said he;
"That giant bulk of his from wounds is
free:

Safe in his shield, he fears no foe to try,
And better manages his blood than I:
But this avails me not: our boaster strove
Not with our foes alone, but partial Jove,
To save the fleet: this I confess is true,
(Nor will I take from any man his due);
But thus assuming all, he robs from you. 420
Some part of honour to your share will fall;
He did the best indeed, but did not all.
Patroclus in Achilles' arms, and thought
The chief he seemed, with equal ardour
fought;

Preserved the fleet, repelled the raging fire,
And forced the fearful Trojans to retire.

"But Ajax boasts that he was only
thought

A match for Hector, who the combat sought :
Sure he forgets the king, the chiefs, and me ;
All were as eager for the fight as he ; 430
He but the ninth, and, not by public voice,
Or ours preferred, was only fortune's choice
They fought ; nor can our hero boast the
event,

For Hector from the field unwounded went.

"Why am I forced to name that fatal
day,

That snatched the prop and pride of Greece
away ?

I saw Pelides sink, with pious grief,
And ran in vain, alas ! to his relief ;
For the brave soul was fled : full of my friend,
I rushed amid the war, his relics to de-
fend : 440

Nor ceased my toil till I redeemed the prey,
And, loaded with Achilles, marched away :
Those arms, which on these shoulders then
I bore,

'Tis just you to these shoulders should
restore.

You see I want not nerves, who could sustain
The ponderous ruins of so great a man :
Or if in others equal force you find,
None is endued with a more grateful mind.

"Did Thetis then, ambitious in her care,
These arms thus laboured for her son pre-
pare, 450

That Ajax after him the heavenly gift should
wear ?

For that dull soul to stare, with stupid eyes,
On the learned, unintelligible prize !

What are to him the sculptures of the shield,
Heaven's planets, earth, and ocean's watery
field ?

The Pleiads, Hyads ; less, and greater Bear,
Undipped in seas ; Orion's angry star ;
Two differing cities, graved on either hand ?
Would he wear arms he cannot understand ?

"Beside, what wise objections he pre-
pares 460

Against my late accession to the wars ?

Does not the fool perceive his argument
Is with more force against Achilles bent ?
For, if dissembling be so great a crime,
The fault is common, and the same in him :
And if he taxes both of long delay,
My guilt is less, who sooner came away.
His pious mother, anxious for his life,
Detained her son ; and me, my pious wife,
To them the blossoms of our youth were
due : 470

Our riper manhood we reserved for you.
But grant me guilty, 'tis not much my care,
When with so great a man my guilt I share :
My wit to war the matchless hero brought,
But by this fool he never had been caught.
"Nor need I wonder, that on me he threw
Such foul aspersions, when he spares not
you :

If Palamede unjustly fell by me,
Your honour suffered in the unjust decree :
I but accused, you doomed : and yet he
died, 480
Convinced of treason, and was fairly tried :
You heard not he was false ; your eyes be-
held

The traitor manifest ; the bribe revealed.
"That Philoctetes* is on Lemnos left,
Wounded, forlorn, of human aid bereft,
Is not my crime, or not my crime alone ;
Defend your justice, for the fact's your own ;
'Tis true, the advice was mine ; that staying
there

He might his weary limbs with rest repair,
From a long voyage free, and from a longer
war. 490

He took the counsel, and he lives at least ;
The event declares I counselled for the best :
Though faith is all in ministers of state ;
For who can promise to be fortunate ?

* Philoctetes was one of the Greek princes who went to the siege of Troy. While at Aulis he suffered from a wound in his foot, which was so unpleasant that by Ulysses' advice he was removed from the camp and left on the island of Lemnos. He possessed the arrows of Hercules, whose funeral pile he had erected, and Troy could not be taken without them. The fate of Philoctetes is the subject of a fine tragedy by Sophocles.

Now since his arrows are the fate of Troy,
Do not my wit, or weak address, employ;
Send Ajax there, with his persuasive sense,
To mollify the man, and draw him thence :
But Xanthus shall run backward ; Ida stand
A leafless mountain ; and the Grecian
band
Shall fight for Troy ; if, when my counsels
fail,

The wit of heavy Ajax can prevail.

" Hard Philoctetes, exercise thy spleen
Against thy fellows, and the king of men :
Curse my devoted head, above the rest,
And wish in arms to meet me breast to
breast :

Yet I the dangerous task will undertake,
And either die myself, or bring thee back.

" Nor doubt the same success, as when
before

The Phrygian prophet to these tents I
bore,
Surprised by night, and forced him to
declare

In what was placed the fortune of the war ;
Heaven's dark decrees and answers to dis-
play,

And how to take the town, and where the
secret lay :

Yet this I compassed, and from Troy con-
veyed

The fatal image of their guardian maid ;
That work was mine ; for Pallas, though
our friend,

Yet while she was in Troy, did Troy defend.
Now what has Ajax done, or what designed ?
A noisy nothing, and an empty wind.

If he be what he promises in show,
Why was I sent, and why feared he to go ?
Our boasting champion thought the task
not light

To pass the guards, commit himself to
night ;

Not only through a hostile town to pass,
But scale, with steep ascent, the sacred
place ;

With wandering steps to search the citadel,
And from the priests their patroness to
steal :

Then through surrounding foes to force my
way,

And bear in triumph home the heavenly
prey ;

Which had I not, Ajax in vain had held,
Before that monstrous bulk, his sevenfold
shield.

That night to conquer Troy I might be said,
When Troy was liable to conquest made.

" Why point'st thou to my partner of the
war ?

Tyides had indeed a worthy share
In all my toil, and praise ; but when thy
might

Our ships protected, didst thou singly fight ?
All joined, and thou of many wert but one
I asked no friend, nor had, but him alone ;

Who, had he not been well assured, that art
And conduct were of war the better part,
And more availed than strength, my valiant
friend

Had urged a better right than Ajax can pre-
tend :

As good at least Eurypylus may claim,
And the more moderate Ajax of the name ;
The Cretan king, and his brave charioteer,
And Menelaus bold with sword and spear ;
All these had been my rivals in the shield,

And yet all these to my pretensions yield. 530
Thy boisterous hands are then of use,
when I

With this directing head those hands apply.
Brawn without brain is thine : my prudent
care

Foresees, provides, administers the war :
Thy province is to fight ; but when shall be
The time to fight, the king consults with me :
No dram of judgment with thy force is
joined ;

Thy body is of profit, and my mind.
By how much more the ship her safety owes
To him who steers, than him that only
rows,

By how much more the captain merits
praise

Than he who fights, and fighting but obeys ?
By so much greater is my worth than thine,
Who canst but execute what I design.

What gain'st thou, brutal man, if I confess
Thy strength superior, when thy wit is less?
Mind is the man: I claim my whole desert
From the mind's vigour, and the immortal
part.

"But you, O Grecian chiefs, reward my
care,

Be grateful to your watchman of the war: 570
For all my labours in so long a space,
Sure I may plead a title to your grace:
Enter the town; I then unbarred the gates,
When I removed their tutelary fates.
By all our common hopes, if hopes they be
Which I have now reduced to certainty;
By falling Troy, by yonder tottering towers,
And by their taken gods, which now are
ours;

Or if there yet a farther task remains,
To be performed by prudence or by
pains; 580

If yet some desperate action rests behind,
That asks high conduct, and a dauntless
mind;

If aught be wanting to the Trojan doom,
Which none but I can manage and o'ercome;
Award those arms I ask, by your decree:
Or give to this what you refuse to me."

He ceased; and, ceasing, with respect he
bowed,

And with his hand at once the fatal statue
showed.

Heaven, air, and ocean rung with loud
applause,

And by the general vote he gained his
cause. 590

Thus conduct won the prize, when courage
failed,

And eloquence o'er brutal force prevailed.

THE DEATH OF AJAX.

He who could often, and alone, withstand
The foe, the fire, and Jove's own partial
hand,

Now cannot his unmastered grief sustain,
But yields to rage, to madness, and dis-
dain;

Then snatching out his fauchion, "Thou,"
said he,

"Art mine; Ulysses lays no claim to thee.

O often tried, and ever trusty sword,
Now do thy last kind office to thy lord; 600
'Tis Ajax who requests thy aid, to show
None but himself, himself could over-
throw."

He said, and with so good a will to die
Did to his breast the fatal point apply,
It found his heart, a way till then unknown,
Where never weapon entered but his own:
No hands could force it thence, so fixed it
stood,

'Till out it rushed, expelled by streams of
spouting blood.

The fruitful blood produced a flower, which
grew

On a green stem, and of a purple hue: 610
Like his, whom unaware Apollo slew.

Inscribed in both, the letters are the same;
But those express the grief, and these the
name.

THE STORY OF ACIS, POLYPHEMUS, AND GALATEA.

FROM THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

ACIS, the lovely youth, whose loss I mourn,
From Faunus and the nymph Symethis
born,

Was both his parents' pleasure; but to me
Was all that love could make a lover be.

The gods our minds in mutual bands did
join:

I was his only joy, and he was mine.

Now sixteen summers the sweet youth had
seen;

And doubtful down began to shade his chin:
When Polyphemus first disturbed our joy,
And loved me fiercely as I loved the boy. 10

Ask not which passion in my soul was
higher,

My last aversion, or my first desire :
Nor this the greater was, nor that the
less ;

Both were alike, for both were in excess.

Thee, Venus, thee both heaven and earth
obey ;

Immense thy power, and boundless is thy
sway.

The Cyclops, who defied th'ethereal throne,
And thought no thunder louder than his
own,

The terror of the woods, and wilder far

Than wolves in plains, or bears in forests
are, 20

Th' inhuman host, who made his bloody
feasts

On mangled members of his butchered
guests,

Yet felt the force of love, and fierce desire,

And burned for me with unrelenting fire :

Forgot his caverns, and his woolly care,

Assumed the softness of a lover's air :

And combed, with teeth of rakes, his rugged
hair.

Now with a crooked scythe his beard he
sleeks,

And mows the stubborn stubble of his
cheeks :

Now in the crystal stream he looks, to
try 30

His simagres, and rolls his glaring eye.

His cruelty and thirst of blood are lost,

And ships securely sail along the coast.

The prophet Telemus (arrived by chance
Where Ætna's summits to the seas ad-
vance,

Who marked the tracks of every bird that
flew,

And sure presages from their flying drew,)
Foretold the Cyclops, that Ulysses' hand
In his broad eye should thrust a flaming
brand.

The giant, with a scornful grin, replied, 40

" Vain augur, thou hast falsely prophesied ;

Already Love his flaming brand has tossed ;

Looking on two fair eyes, my sight I lost."

Thus, warned in vain, with stalking pace
he strode,

And stamped the margin of the briny
flood

With heavy steps ; and, weary, sought again
The cool retirement of his gloomy den.

A promontory, sharpening by degrees,
Ends in a wedge, and overlooks the seas :

On either side, below, the water flows : 50
This airy walk the giant-lover chose ;

Here on the midst he sate ; his flocks,
unled,

Their shepherd followed, and securely fed.

A pine so burly, and of length so vast,

That sailing ships required it for a mast,

He wielded for a staff, his steps to guide :

But laid it by, his whistle while he tried.

A hundred reeds, of a prodigious growth,

Scarce made a pipe proportioned to his
mouth :

Which when he gave it wind, the rocks
around, 60

And watery plains, the dreadful hiss re-
sound.

I heard the ruffian shepherd rudely blow,

Where, in a hollow cave, I sat below ;

On Acis' bosom I my head reclined :

And still preserve the poem in my mind.

" O lovely Galatea, whiter far

Than falling snows, and rising lilies are ;

More flowery than the meads ; as crystal
bright :

Erect as alders, and of equal height :

More wanton than a kid ; more sleek thy
skin 70

Than orient shells, that on the shores are
seen :

Than apples fairer, when the boughs they
lade ;

Pleasing as winter suns, or summer shade :

More grateful to the sight than goodly
plains ;

And softer to the touch than down of
swans,

Or curds new turned ; and sweeter to the
taste

Than swelling grapes, that to the vintage
haste :

More clear than ice, or running streams,
 that stray
 Through garden plots, but, ah! more swift
 than they.
 "Yet, Galatea, harder to be broke 80
 Than bullocks, unreclaimed to bear the
 yoke:
 And far more stubborn than the knotted
 oak:
 Like sliding streams, impossible to hold;
 Like them fallacious; like their fountains,
 cold:
 More warping than the willow, to decline
 My warm embrace; more brittle than the
 vine;
 Immoveable, and fixed in thy disdain;
 Rough as these rocks, and of a harder
 grain:
 More violent than is the rising flood;
 And the praised peacock is not half so
 proud: 90
 Fierce as the fire, and sharp as thistles are;
 And more outrageous than a mother-bear:
 Deaf as the billows to the vows I make;
 And more revengeful than a trodden snake:
 In swiftness fleetier than the flying hind,
 Or driven tempests, or the driving wind.
 All other faults with patience I can bear;
 But swiftness is the vice I only fear.
 "Yet, if you knew me well, you would
 not shun
 My love, but to my wished embraces
 run: 100
 Would languish in your turn, and court my
 stay;
 And much repent of your unwise delay.
 "My palace, in the living rock, is made
 By nature's hand; a spacious pleasing
 shade;
 Which neither heat can pierce, nor cold
 invade.
 My garden filled with fruits you may be-
 hold,
 And grapes in clusters, imitating gold;
 Some blushing bunches of a purple hue:
 And these, and those, are all reserved for you.
 Red strawberries in shades expecting stand
 Proud to be gathered by so white a hand;
 Autumnal cornels latter fruit provide, 110
 And plums, to tempt you, turn their glossy
 side:
 Not those of common kinds; but such
 alone,
 As in Phæacian orchards might have
 grown:
 Nor chestnuts shall be wanting to your
 food,
 Nor garden-fruits, nor wildings of the
 wood;
 The laden boughs for you alone shall bear;
 And yours shall be the product of the
 year.
 "The flocks, you see, are all my own;
 beside 120
 The rest that woods and winding valleys
 hide;
 And those that folded in the caves abide.
 Ask not the numbers of my growing store;
 Who knows how many, knows he has no
 more.
 Nor will I praise my cattle; trust not me,
 But judge yourself, and pass your own
 decree:
 Behold their swelling dugs; the sweepy
 weight
 Of ewes, that sink beneath the milky
 freight;
 In the warm folds their tender lambkins
 lie;
 Apart from kids, that call with human
 cry. 130
 New milk in nut-brown bowls is duly
 served
 For daily drink; the rest for cheese re-
 served.
 Nor are these household dainties all my
 store:
 The fields and forests will afford us more;
 The deer, the hare, the goat, the savage
 boar:
 All sorts of venison; and of birds the best;
 A pair of turtles taken from the nest.
 I walked the mountains, and two cubs I
 found,
 Whose dam had left 'em on the naked
 ground;

So like, that no distinction could be seen ; 140
 So pretty, they were presents for a queen ;
 And so they shall ; I took them both away ;
 And keep, to be companions of your play.

"Oh raise, fair nymph, your beauteous
 face above

The waves ; nor scorn my presents, and my
 love.

Come, Galatea, come, and view my face ;
 I late beheld it in the watery glass,
 And found it lovelier than I feared it was.
 Survey my towering stature, and my size ;
 Not Jove, the Jove you dream, that rules
 the skies, 150

Bears such a bulk, or is so largely spread :
 My locks (the plenteous harvest of my head)
 Hang o'er my manly face ; and dangling
 down,

As with a shady grove, my shoulders
 crown.

Nor think, because my limbs and body
 bear

A thick-set underwood of bristling hair,
 My shape deformed : what fouler sight can
 be

Than the bald branches of a leafless tree ?
 Foul is the steed without a flowing mane ;
 And birds, without their feathers, and their
 train. 160

Wool decks the sheep ; and man receives a
 grace

From bushy limbs, and from a bearded
 face.

My forehead with a single eye is filled,
 Round as a ball, and ample as a shield.
 The glorious lamp of heaven, the radiant
 sun,

Is nature's eye ; and she's content with one.
 Add, that my father sways your seas,
 and I,

Like you, am of the watery family.
 I make you his, in making you my own ;
 You I adore, and kneel to you alone : 170
 Jove, with his fabled thunder, I despise,
 And only fear the lightning of your eyes.
 Frown not, fair nymph ; yet I could bear
 to be

Disdained, if others were disdained with me.

But to repulse the Cyclops, and prefer
 The love of Acis, heavens ! I cannot bear.
 But let the stripling please himself ; nay
 more,

Please you, though that's the thing I most
 abhor ;

The boy shall find, if e'er we cope in fight,
 These giant limbs endued with giant
 might. 180

His living bowels from his belly torn,
 And scattered limbs, shall on the flood be
 borne,
 Thy flood, ungrateful nymph ; and fate
 shall find

That way for thee and Acis to be joined,
 For, oh ! I burn with love, and thy disdain
 Augments at once my passion and my
 pain.

Translated Ætna flames within my heart,
 And thou, inhuman, wilt not ease my
 smart."

Lamenting thus in vain, he rose, and
 strode

With furious paces to the neighbouring
 wood : 190

Restless his feet, distracted was his walk ;
 Mad were his motions, and confused his
 talk.

Mad as the vanquished bull, when forced to
 yield

His lovely mistress, and forsake the field.
 Thus far unseen I saw : when, fatal
 chance

His looks directing, with a sudden glance,
 Acis and I were to his sight betrayed ;
 Where, nought suspecting, we securely
 played.

From his wide mouth a bellowing cry he
 cast ;

"I see, I see ! but this shall be your
 last." 200

A roar so loud made Ætna to rebound ;
 And all the Cyclops laboured in the sound.
 Affrighted with his monstrous voice, I fled,
 And in the neighbouring ocean plunged
 my head.

Poor Acis turned his back, and, "Help," he
 said,

" Help, Galatea ! help, my parent gods,
And take me dying to your deep abodes ! "

The Cyclops followed ; but he sent before
A rib, which from the living rock he
tore :

Though but an angle reached him of the
stone, 210

The mighty fragment was enough alone
To crush all Acis ; 'twas too late to save,
But what the Fates allowed to give, I
gave :

That Acis to his lineage should return ;
And roll, among the river gods, his urn.

Straight issued from the stone a stream of
blood ;

Which lost the purple, mingling with the
flood.

Then like a troubled torrent it appeared ;
The torrent too, in little space, was cleared.

The stone was cleft, and through the
yawning chink 220

New reeds arose, on the new river's brink.
The rock, from out its hollow womb, dis-
closed

A sound like water in its course opposed :
When (wondrous to behold) full in the
flood

Up starts a youth, and navel-high he stood.
Horns from his temples rise ; and either
horn

Thick wreaths of reeds (his native growth)
adorn.

Were not his stature taller than before,
His bulk augmented, and his beauty more,
His colour blue, for Acis he might pass : 230

And Acis changed into a stream he was.
But mine no more, he rolls along the plains
With rapid motion, and his name retains.

TRANSLATIONS FROM HOMER.

THE FIRST BOOK OF HOMER'S ILIAS.

THE ARGUMENT.

Chryses, priest of Apollo, brings presents to the Grecian princes, to ransom his daughter, Chryseis, who was prisoner in the fleet. Agamemnon, the general, whose captive and mistress the young lady was, refuses to deliver her, threatens the venerable old man, and dismisses him with contumely.—The priest craves vengeance of his god, who sends a plague among the Greeks, which occasions Achilles, their great champion, to summon a council of the chief officers: he encourages Calchas, the high priest and prophet, to tell the reason why the gods were so much incensed against them.—Calchas is fearful of provoking Agamemnon, till Achilles engages to protect him; then, emboldened by the hero, he accuses the general as the cause of all, by detaining the fair captive, and refusing the presents offered for her ransom. By this proceeding, Agamemnon is obliged, against his will, to restore Chryseis, with gifts, that he might appease the wrath of Phoebus; but, at the same time, to revenge himself on Achilles, sends to seize his slave, Briseis. Achilles, thus affronted, complains to his mother, Thetis; and begs her to revenge his injury, not only on the general, but on all the army, by giving victory to the Trojans, till the ungrateful king became sensible of his injustice. At the same time he retires from the camp into his ships, and withdraws his aid from his countrymen. Thetis prefers her son's petition to Jupiter, who grants her suit. Juno suspects her errand, and quarrels with her husband, for his grant; till Vulcan reconciles his parents with a bowl of nectar, and sends them peaceably to bed.

THE wrath of Peleus' son, O Muse, resound;
Whose dire effects the Grecian army found,
And many a hero, king, and hardy knight,
Were sent, in early youth, to shades of night:

Their limbs a prey to dogs and vultures made:
So was the sovereign will of Jove obeyed;
From that ill-omened hour when strife begun,
Betwixt Atreides great, and Thetis' god-like son.

What Power provoked, and for what cause, relate,
Sowed in their breasts the seeds of stern debate;
Jove's and Latona's son his wrath expressed,
In vengeance of his violated priest,
Against the king of men; who, swollen with pride,
Refused his presents, and his prayers denied.
For this the god a swift contagion spread
Amid the camp, where heaps on heaps lay dead.

For venerable Chryses came to buy,
With gold and gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.
Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood;
Awful, and armed with ensigns of his god: so
Bare was his hoary head; one holy hand
Held forth his laurel crown, and one his sceptre of command.

His suit was common; but above the rest,
To both the brother-princes thus addressed:
"Ye sons of Atreus, and ye Grecian powers,
So may the gods who dwell in heavenly bowers
Succeed your siege, accord the vows you make,
And give you Troy's imperial town to take;

So, by their happy conduct, may you come
With conquest back to your sweet native
home ;

As you receive the ransom which I bring,
(Respecting Jove, and the far-shooting
King,)

And break my daughter's bonds, at my
desire ;

And glad with her return her grieving sire."

With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks
decree

To take the gifts, to set the damsel free.

The king of men alone with fury burned ;

And, haughty, these opprobrious words re-
turned :

" Hence, holy dotard, and avoid my sight,
Ere evil intercept thy tardy flight :

Nor dare to tread this interdicted strand,

Lest not that idle sceptre in thy hand,

Nor thy god's crown, my vowed revenge
withstand.

Hence on thy life : the captive maid is mine ;

Whom not for price or prayers I will resign :

Mine she shall be, till creeping age and
time

Her bloom have withered, and consumed
her prime.

Till then my royal bed she shall attend ;

And, having first adorned it, late ascend :

This, for the night ; by day, the web and
loom,

And homely household-task, shall be her
doom,

Far from thy loved embrace, and her sweet
native home."

He said : the helpless priest replied no
more,

But sped his steps along the hoarse-re-
sounding shore :

Silent he fled ; secure at length he stood,

Devoutly cursed his foes, and thus invoked
his god :

" O source of sacred light, attend my
prayer,

God with the silver bow, and golden hair ;

Whom Chrysa, Cilla, Tenedos obeys,

And whose broad eye their happy soil
surveys ;

If, Smintheus, I have poured before thy
shrine

The blood of oxen, goats, and ruddy wine,

And larded thighs on loaded altars laid,

Hear, and my just revenge propitious aid !

Pierce the proud Greeks, and with thy
shafts attest

How much thy power is injured in thy
priest."

He prayed, and Phœbus, hearing, urged
his flight,

With fury kindled, from Olympus' height ;

His quiver o'er his ample shoulders threw ;

His bow twanged, and his arrows rattled

as they flew.

Black as a stormy night, he ranged around

The tents, and compassed the devoted
ground.

Then with full force his deadly bow he bent,
And feathered fates among the mules and

sumpters sent,

The essay of rage ; on faithful dogs the

next ;

And last, in human hearts his arrows fixed.

The god nine days the Greeks at rovers
killed,

Nine days the camp with funeral fires was
filled ;

The tenth, Achilles, by the Queen's com-
mand,

Who bears Heaven's awful sceptre in her
hand,

A council summoned : for the goddess
grieved

Her favoured host should perish unrelieved.

The kings, assembled, soon their chief
enclose ;

Then from his seat the goddess-born arose,
And thus undaunted spoke : " What now

remains,

But that once more we tempt the watery
plains,

And, wandering homeward, seek our safety
hence,

In flight at least, if we can find defence ?

Such woes at once encompass us about,

The plague within the camp, the sword
without.

Consult, O king, the prophets of the event :
And whence these ills, and what the god's
intent,

Let them by dreams explore ; for dreams
from Jove are sent.

What want of offered victims, what offence
In fact committed could the Sun incense,
To deal his deadly shafts ? What may re-
move

His settled hate, and reconcile his love ?
That he may look propitious on our toils ;
And hungry graves no more be glutted with
our spoils."

Thus to the king of men the hero
spoke, 100

Then Calchas the desired occasion took :
Calchas the sacred seer, who had in view
Things present and the past ; and things
to come foreknew.

Supreme of augurs, who, by Phoebus
taught,

The Grecian powers to Troy's destruction
brought.

Skilled in the secret causes of their woes,
The reverend priest in graceful act arose ;
And thus bespoke Pelides : " Care of Jove,
Favoured of all the immortal Powers
above ;

Wouldst thou the seeds deep sown of
mischiefs know, 110

And why, provoked, Apollo bends his
bow ?

Plight first thy faith, inviolably true,
To save me from those ills, that may ensue.

" For I shall tell ungrateful truths to those,
Whose boundless powers of life and death
dispose,

And sovereigns, ever jealous of their state,
Forgive not those whom once they mark
for hate :

Even though the offence they seemingly
digest,

Revenge, like embers raked, within their
breast,

Bursts forth in flames ; whose unresisted
power 120

Will seize the unwary wretch, and soon
devour.

Such, and no less is he, on whom depends
The sum of things ; and whom my tongue
of force offends.

Secure me then from his foreseen intent,
That what his wrath may doom, thy valour
may prevent."

To this the stern Achilles made reply :
" Be bold ; and on my plighted faith rely,
To speak what Phoebus has inspired thy soul
For common good ; and speak without
control.

His godhead I invoke ; by him I swear, 130
That while my nostrils draw this vital air,
None shall presume to violate those bands ;
Or touch thy person with unhallowed
hands :

Even not the king of men, that all com-
mands."

At this, resuming heart, the prophet said :
" Nor hecatomb unslain, nor vows unpaid,
On Greeks accursed this dire contagion
bring,

Or call for vengeance from the bowyer *
King ;

But he the tyrant, whom none dares resist,
Affronts the godhead in his injured
priest : 140

He keeps the damsel captive in his chain,
And presents are refused, and prayers pre-
ferred in vain.

For this the avenging Power employs his
darts,

And empties all his quiver in our hearts ;
Thus will persist, relentless in his ire,
Till the fair slave be rendered to her
sire ;

And ransom-free restored to his abode,
With sacrifice to reconcile the god :
Then he, perhaps, atoned by prayer, may
cease

His vengeance justly vowed, and give the
peace." 150

Thus having said, he sate ; thus answered
then,

Upstarting from his throne, the king of
men,

* Archer king : Apollo.

His breast with fury filled, his eyes with fire ;

Which, rolling round, he shot in sparkles on the sire :

" Augur of ill, whose tongue was never found

Without a priestly curse, or boding sound ;
For not one blessed event foretold to me
Passed through that mouth, or passed unwillingly.

And now thou dost with lies the throne invade,

By practice hardened in thy slandering trade. 180

Obtending Heaven, for whate'er ills befall ;
And sputtering under specious names thy gall.

Now Phoebus is provoked, his rites and laws

Are in his priest profaned, and I the cause :
Since I detain a slave, my sovereign prize ;
And sacred gold, your idol-god, despise.
I love her well : and well her merits claim
To stand preferred before my Grecian dame :

Not Clytemnestra's self in beauty's bloom
More charmed, or better plied the various loom : 170

Mine is the maid ; and brought in happy hour,

With every household-grace adorned, to bless my nuptial bower.

Yet shall she be restored ; since public good

For private interest ought not to be withstood,

To save the effusion of my people's blood.
But right requires, if I resign my own,
I should not suffer for your sakes alone ;
Alone excluded from the prize I gained,
And by your common suffrage have obtained.

The slave without a ransom shall be sent : 180

It rests for you to make the equivalent."

To this the fierce Thessalian prince replied :

" O first in power, but passing all in pride,

Gripping, and still tenacious of thy hold,
Wouldst thou the Grecian chiefs, though largely souled,

Should give the prizes they had gained before,

And with their loss thy sacrilege restore ?

Whate'er by force of arms the soldier got,
Is each his own, by dividend of lot :

Which to resume, were both unjust and base ; 190

Not to be borne but by a servile race.
But this we can : if Saturn's son bestows

The sack of Troy, which he by promise owes ;
Then shall the conquering Greeks thy loss restore,

And with large interest make the advantage more."

To this Atreides answered : " Though thy boast

Assumes the foremost name of all our host,
Pretend not, mighty man, that what is mine,

Controlled by thee, I tamely should resign.
Shall I release the prize I gained by right, 200

In taken towns, and many a bloody fight,
While thou detain'st Briseis in thy bands,
By priestly glossing on the god's commands ?

Resolve on this, (a short alternative)

Quit mine, or, in exchange, another give ;
Else I, assure thy soul, by sovereign right

Will seize thy captive in thy own despite ;
Or from stout Ajax, or Ulysses, bear

What other prize my fancy shall prefer.
Then softly murmur, or aloud complain, 210

Rage as you please, you shall resist in vain.
But more of this, in proper time and place ;

To things of greater moment let us pass.
A ship to sail the sacred seas prepare ;

Proud in her trim ; and put on board the fair,

With sacrifice and gifts, and all the pomp of prayer.

The crew well chosen, the command shall be
In Ajax ; or if other I decree,

In Creta's king, or Ithacus, or, if I please,
in thee :

Most fit thyself to see performed the intent 230

For which my prisoner from my sight is sent ;

(Thanks to thy pious care) that Phœbus may relent."

At this, Achilles rolled his furious eyes,
Fixed on the king askant; and thus replies :

"O impudent, regardful of thy own,
Whose thoughts are centred on thyself alone,

Advanced to sovereign sway for better ends

Than thus like abject slaves to treat thy friends.

What Greek is he, that, urged by thy command,

Against the Trojan troops will lift his hand? 230

Not I : nor such enforced respect I owe :
Nor Pergamus I hate, nor Priam is my foe.

What wrong, from Troy remote, could I sustain,

To leave my fruitful soil, and happy reign,
And plough the surges of the stormy main?

Thee, frontless man, we followed from afar ;
Thy instruments of death, and tools of war.

Thine is the triumph ; ours the toil alone :
We bear thee on our backs, and mount thee on the throne.

For thee we fall in fight ; for thee redress 240

Thy baffled brother ; not the wrongs of Greece.

And now thou threaten'st, with unjust decree,

To punish thy affronting heaven, on me ;
To seize the prize which I so dearly bought,

By common suffrage given, confirmed by lot.
Mean match to thine : for still above the rest,

Thy hooked rapacious hands usurp the best ;

Though mine are first in fight, to force the prey,

And last sustain the labours of the day.

Nor grudge I thee the much the Grecians give ; 250

Nor murmuring take the little I receive.
Yet even this little, thou, who wouldst engross

The whole, insatiate, enviest as thy loss.
Know, then, for Phthia fixed is my return :

Better at home my ill-paid pains to mourn,

Than from an equal here sustain the public scorn."

The king, whose brows with shining gold were bound,

Who saw his throne with sceptred slaves encompassed round,

Thus answered stern : "Go, at thy pleasure, go :

We need not such a friend, nor fear we such a foe. 260

There will not want to follow me in fight :
Jove will assist, and Jove assert my right.

But thou of all the kings (his care below)
Art least at my command, and most my foe.

Debates, dissensions, uproars are thy joy ;
Provoked without offence, and practised to destroy.

Strength is of brutes, and not thy boast alone ;

At least 'tis lent from heaven ; and not thy own.

Fly then, ill-mannered, to thy native land,
And there thy ant-born Myrmidons command. 270

But mark this menace ; since I must resign

My black-eyed maid, to please the Powers divine ;

(A well-rigged vessel in the port attends,
Manned at my charge, commanded by my friends.)

The ship shall waft her to her wished abode,

Full fraught with holy bribes to the far-shooting god.

This thus dispatched, I owe myself the care

My fame and injured honour to repair :

From thy own tent, proud man, in thy
despite,
This hand shall ravish thy pretended
right. 280

Briseis shall be mine, and thou shalt see
What odds of awful power I have on
thee :

That others at thy cost may learn the differ-
ence of degree."

At this the impatient hero sourly smiled :
His heart impetuous in his bosom boiled,
And justled by two tides of equal sway,
Stood, for a while, suspended in his way,
Betwixt his reason and his rage untamed :
One whispered soft, and one aloud re-
claimed :

That only counselled to the safer side ; 290
This to the sword his ready hand applied.
Unpunished to support the affront was
hard :

Nor easy was the attempt to force the
guard.

But soon the thirst of vengeance fired his
blood :

Half shone his falchion, and half sheathed
it stood.

In that nice moment, Pallas, from above,
Commissioned by the imperial wife of Jove,
Descended swift : (the white-armed Queen
was loth

The fight should follow ; for she favoured
both :)

Just as in act he stood, in clouds en-
shrined, 300

Her hand she fastened on his hair behind :
Then backward by his yellow curls she
drew ;

To him, and him alone confessed in view.
Tamed by superior force, he turned his
eyes

Aghast at first, and stupid with surprise :
But by her sparkling eyes, and ardent look,
The virgin-warrior known, he thus be-
spoke :

"Con'st thou, Celestial, to behold my
wrongs ?

To view the vengeance which to crimes
belongs ?"

Thus he. The blue-eyed goddess thus
rejoined : 310

"I come to calm thy turbulence of mind,
If reason will resume her sovereign sway,
And, sent by Juno, her commands obey.
Equal she loves you both, and I protect :
Then give thy guardian gods their due
respect ;

And cease contention ; be thy words severe,
Sharp as he merits : but the sword forbear.
An hour unhoped already wings her way,
When he his dire affront shall dearly pay :
When the proud king shall sue, with treble
gain, 320

To quit thy loss, and conquer thy disdain.
But thou, secure of my unfailing word,
Compose thy swelling soul, and sheathe
the sword."

The youth thus answered mild : "Aus-
picious Maid,
Heaven's will be mine, and your commands
obeyed.

The gods are just, and when, subduing
sense,

We serve their powers, provide the recom-
pense."

He said ; with surly faith believed her word,
And in the sheath, reluctant, plunged the
sword.

Her message done, she mounts the blessed
abodes, 330

And mixed among the senate of the gods.
At her departure his disdain returned :
The fire she fanned, with greater fury
burned ;

Rumbling within, till thus it found a vent :
"Dastard, and drunkard, mean and inso-
lent :

Tongue-valiant hero, vaunter of thy might,
In threats the foremost, but the lag in fight ;
When didst thou thrust amid the mingled
prease,

Content to bide the war aloof in peace ?
Arms are the trade of each plebeian
soul ; 340

'Tis death to fight ; but kingly to control.
Lord-like at ease, with arbitrary power,
To peel the chiefs, the people to devour :

These, traitor, are thy talents ; safer far
 Than to contend in fields, and toils of war.
 Nor couldst thou thus have dared the
 common hate,
 Were not their souls as abject as their state.
 But, by this sceptre, solemnly I swear,
 (Which never more green leaf or growing
 branch shall bear ;
 Torn from the tree, and given by Jove to
 those 350
 Who laws dispense, and mighty wrongs
 oppose)
 That when the Grecians want my wonted
 aid,
 No gift shall bribe it, and no prayer per-
 suade.
 When Hector comes, the homicide, to wield
 His conquering arms, with corpse to strow
 the field,
 Then shalt thou mourn thy pride ; and late
 confess
 My wrong repented, when 'tis past redress."
 He said : and with disdain, in open view,
 Against the ground his golden sceptre
 threw ;
 Then sate : with boiling rage Atides
 burned, 360
 And foam betwixt his gnashing grinders
 churned.
 But from his seat the Pylian prince arose,
 With reasoning mild, their madness to
 compose :
 Words, sweet as honey, from his mouth
 distilled ;
 Two centuries already he fulfilled,
 And now began the third ; unbroken yet :
 Once famed for courage ; still in council
 great.
 "What worse," he said, "can Argos
 undergo,
 What can more gratify the Phrygian foe,
 Than these distempered heats, if both the
 lights 370
 Of Greece their private interest disunites ?
 Believe a friend, with thrice your years in-
 creased,
 And let these youthful passions be re-
 pressed :

I flourished long before your birth ; and
 then
 Lived equal with a race of braver men
 Than these dim eyes shall e'er behold again,
 Ceneus and Dryas, and, excelling them,
 Great Theseus, and the force of greater
 Polypheme.
 With these I went, a brother of the war,
 Their dangers to divide ; their fame to
 share. 380
 Nor idle stood with unassisting hands,
 When salvage beasts, and men's more sal-
 vage bands,
 Their virtuous toil subdued : yet those I
 swayed,
 With powerful speech : I spoke, and they
 obeyed.
 If such as those my counsels could reclaim,
 Think not, young warriors, your diminished
 name
 Shall lose of lustre, by subjecting rage
 To the cool dictates of experienced age.
 Thou, king of men, stretch not thy sovereign
 sway
 Beyond the bounds free subjects can
 obey : 390
 But let Pelides in his prize rejoice,
 Achieved in arms, allowed by public voice.
 Nor thou, brave champion, with his power
 contend,
 Before whose throne even kings their
 lowered sceptres bend.
 The head of action he, and thou the hand ;
 Matchless thy force, but mightier his com-
 mand :
 Thou first, O king, release the rights of
 sway ;
 Power, self-restrained, the people best obey.
 Sanctions of law from thee derive their
 source ;
 Command thyself, whom no commands
 can force. 400
 The son of Thetis, rampire of our host,
 Is worth our care to keep ; nor shall my
 prayers be lost."
 Thus Nestor said, and ceased : Atides
 broke
 Hissilence next ; but pondered ere he spoke :

"Wise are thy words, and glad I would obey,

But this proud man affects imperial sway.
Controlling kings, and trampling on our state,

His will is law; and what he wills is fate.

The gods have given him strength: but whence the style

Of lawless power assumed, or licence to revile?" 410

Achilles cut him short; and thus replied:

"My worth, allowed in words, is in effect, denied.

For who but a poltroon, possessed with fear,

Such haughty insolence can tamely bear?

Command thy slaves: my freeborn soul disdains

A tyrant's curb; and restive breaks the reins.

Take this along; that no dispute shall rise
(Though mine the woman) for my ravished prize:

But, she excepted, as unworthy strife,

Dare not, I charge thee dare not, on thy life, 420

Touch aught of mine beside, by lot my due,

But stand aloof, and think profane to view;
This fauchion, else, not hitherto withstood,

These hostile fields shall fatten with thy blood."

He said; and rose the first: the council broke;

And all their grave consults dissolved in smoke.

The royal youth retired, on vengeance bent,

Patroclus followed silent to his tent.

Meantime, the king with gifts a vessel stores;

Supplies the banks with twenty chosen oars: 430

And next, to reconcile the shooter god,

Within her hollow sides the sacrifice he stowed:

Chryseis last was set on board; whose hand Ulysses took, intrusted with command:

They plough the liquid seas, and leave the lessening land.

Atrides then, his outward zeal to boast,
Bade purify the sin-polluted host.

With perfect hecatombs the god they graced;

Whose offered entrails in the main were cast.

Black bulls, and bearded goats on altars lie; 440

And clouds of savoury stench involve the sky.

These poms the royal hypocrite designed
For show; but harboured vengeance in his mind:

Till holy malice, longing for a vent,

At length discovered his concealed intent.

Talthybius, and Eurybates the just,

Heralds of arms, and ministers of trust,

He called, and thus bespoke: "Haste hence your way;

And from the goddess-born demand his prey.

If yielded, bring the captive; if denied, 450

The king (so tell him) shall chastise his pride:

And with armed multitudes in person come
To vindicate his power, and justify his doom."

This hard command unwilling they obey,
And o'er the barren shore pursue their way,
Where quartered in their camp the fierce Thessalians lay.

Their sovereign seated on his chair they find;

His pensive cheek upon his hand reclined,

And anxious thoughts revolving in his mind.

With gloomy looks he saw them entering in 460

Without salute: nor durst they first begin,
Fearful of rash offence and death foreseen.

He soon, the cause divining, cleared his brow;

And thus did liberty of speech allow:

"Interpreters of gods and men, be bold:
Awful your character, and uncontrolled;

Howe'er displeasing be the news you bring,
I blame not you, but your imperious king.
You come, I know, my captive to demand;
Patroclus, give her to the heralds' hand. 470
But you authentic witnesses I bring,
Before the gods, and your ungrateful king,
Of this my manifest : that never more
This hand shall combat on the crooked
shore :

No, let the Grecian powers, oppressed in
fight,

Unpitied perish in their tyrant's sight.
Blind of the future, and by rage misled,
He pulls his crimes upon his people's head :
Forced from the field in trenches to contend,
And his insulted camp from foes defend." 480
He said, and soon, obeying his intent,
Patroclus brought Briseis from her tent ;
Then to the intrusted messengers resigned :
She wept, and often cast her eyes behind :
Forced from the man she loved : they led
her thence,

Along the shore, a prisoner to their prince.
Sole on the barren sands the suffering
chief

Roared out for anguish, and indulged his
grief.

Cast on his kindred seas a stormy look,
And his upbraided mother thus bespoke : 490

" Unhappy parent of a short-lived son,
Since Jove in pity by thy prayers was won
To grace my small remains of breath with
fame,

Why loads he this imbittered life with
shame?

Suffering his king of men to force my slave,
Whom, well deserved in war, the Grecians
gave?"

Set by old Ocean's side the goddess
heard ;

Then from the sacred deep her head she
reared ;

Rose like a morning-mist ; and thus begun
To soothe the sorrows of her plaintive
son : 500

" Why cries my care, and why conceals his
smart?

Let thy afflicted parent share her part."

Then, sighing from the bottom of his
breast,

To the sea-goddess thus the goddess-born
addressed :

" Thou know'st my pain, which telling but
recalls :

By force of arms we razed the Theban walls ;
The ransacked city, taken by our toils,
We left, and hither brought the golden
spoils ;

Equal we shared them ; but before the rest,
The proud prerogative had seized the
best ; 510

Chryseis was the greedy tyrant's prize,
Chryseis, rosy-cheeked, with charming eyes.
Her sire, Apollo's priest, arrived to buy,
With proffered gifts of price, his daughter's
liberty.

Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood,
Awful, and armed with ensigns of his god :
Bare was his hoary head ; one holy hand
Held forth his laurel crown, and one his
sceptre of command.

His suit was common, but above the rest,
To both the brother princes was ad-
dressed. 520

With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks agree
To take the gifts, to set the prisoner free.
Not so the tyrant, who with scorn the priest
Received, and with opprobrious words dis-
missed.

The good old man, forlorn of human aid,
For vengeance to his heavenly patron
prayed :

The godhead gave a favourable ear,
And granted all to him he held so dear ;
In an ill hour his piercing shafts he sped ;
And heaps on heaps of slaughtered Greeks
lay dead, 530

While round the camp he ranged : at length
arose

A seer, who well divined ; and durst disclose
The source of all our ills : I took the word ;
And urged the sacred slave to be restored,
The god appeared : the swelling monarch
stormed :

And then the vengeance vowed, he since
performed.

The Greeks, 'tis true, their ruin to prevent,
Have to the royal priest his daughter sent ;
But from their haughty king his heralds

came,
And seized, by his command, my captive
dame, 540

By common suffrage given ; but, thou, be
won,

If in thy power, to avenge thy injured son :
Ascend the skies ; and supplicating move
Thy just complaint to cloud-compelling
Jove.

If thou by either word or deed hast wrought
A kind remembrance in his grateful thought,
Urge him by that : for often hast thou said
Thy power was once not useless in his aid,
When he, who high above the highest
reigns,

Surprised by traitor gods, was bound in
chains. 550

When Juno, Pallas, with ambition fired,
And his blue brother of the seas conspired,
Thou freed'st the sovereign from unworthy
bands,

Thou brought'st Briareus with his hundred
hands,

(So called in heaven, but mortal men below
By his terrestrial name *Ægæon* know :

Twice stronger than his sire, who sate above
Assessor to the throne of thundering Jove.)

The gods, dismayed at his approach, with-
drew,

Nor durst their unaccomplished crime
pursue. 560

That action to his grateful mind recall :
Embrace his knees, and at his footstool fall :

That now, if ever, he will aid our foes ;
Let Troy's triumphant troops the camp in-
close :

Ours, beaten to the shore, the siege forsake ;
And what their king deserves, with him
partake ;

That the proud tyrant, at his proper cost,
May learn the value of the man he lost."

To whom the Mother-goddess thus re-
plied,

Sighed ere she spoke, and while she spoke
she cried : 570

" Ah wretched me : by fates averse decided
To bring thee forth with pain, with care to
breed !

Did envious heaven not otherwise ordain,
Safe in thy hollow ships thou shouldst re-
main ;

Nor ever tempt the fatal field again.
But now thy planet sheds his poisonous
rays,

And short and full of sorrow are thy days.
For what remains, to heaven I will ascend,
And at the Thunderer's throne thy suit
commend.

Till then, secure in ships, abstain from
fight ; 580

Indulge thy grief in tears, and vent thy
spite.

For yesterday the court of heaven with Jove
Removed : 'tis dead vacation now above.

Twelve days the gods their solemn revels
keep,

And quaff with blameless Ethiops in the
deep.

Returned from thence, to heaven my flight
I take,

Knock at the brazen gates, and Providence
awake ;

Embrace his knees, and suppliant to the sire,
Doubt not I will obtain the grant of thy
desire."

She said : and, parting, left him on the
place, 590

Swoll'n with disdain, resenting his disgrace :
Revengeful thoughts revolving in his mind,
He wept for anger, and for love he pined.

Meantime with prosperous gales *Ulysses*
brought

The slave, and ship with sacrifices fraught,
To *Chrysa's* port ; where, entering with the
tide,

He dropped his anchors, and his oars he
plied ;

Furled every sail, and, drawing down the
mast,

His vessel moored, and made with haulsers
fast. 600

Descending on the plain, ashore they bring
The hecatomb to please the shooter King.

The dame before an altar's holy fire

Ulysses led ; and thus bespoke her sire :

"Reverenced be thou, and be thy god
adored :

The king of men thy daughter has restored ;
And sent by me with presents and with
prayer ;

He recommends him to thy pious care ;

That Phœbus at thy suit his wrath may
cease,

And give the penitent offenders peace."

He said, and gave her to her father's
hands, 610

Who glad received her, free from servile
bands.

This done, in order they, with sober grace,
Their gifts around the well-built altar place ;
Then washed, and took the cakes ; while
Chryses stood

With hands upheld, and thus invoked his
god :

"God of the silver bow, whose eyes survey

The sacred Cilla, thou, whose awful sway

Chrysa the blessed, and Tenedos obey :

Now hear, as thou before my prayer hast
heard,

Against the Grecians, and their prince,
preferred : 620

Once thou hast honoured, honour once again
Thy priest ; nor let his second vows be vain.
But from the afflicted host and humbled
prince

Avert thy wrath, and cease thy pestilence."

Apollo heard, and, conquering his disdain,
Unbent his bow, and Greece respired again.

Now when the solemn rites of prayer were
past,

Their salted cakes on crackling flames they
cast,

Then, turning back, the sacrifice they sped ;
The fatted oxen slew, and flead the dead ; 630

Chopped off their nervous thighs, and next
prepared

To involve the lean in cauls, and mend with
lard.

Sweet-breads and collops were with skewers
pricked

About the sides ; imbibing what they decked.

The priest with holy hands was seen to tine
The cloven wood, and pour the ruddy
wine.

The youth approached the fire, and, as it
burned,

On five sharp broachers ranked, the roast
they turned ;

These morsels stayed their stomachs ; then
the rest

They cut in legs and fillets for the feast ; 640

Which drawn and served, their hunger they
appease

With savoury meat, and set their minds at
ease.

Now when the rage of eating was repelled,

The boys with generous wine the goblets
filled.

The first libations to the gods they pour :

And then with songs indulge the genial
hour.

Holy debauch ! till day to night they bring,

With hymns and pæans to the bowyer King.

At sunset to their ship they make return,

And snore secure on decks, till rosy
morn. 650

The skies with dawning day were purpled
o'er ;

Awaked, with labouring oars they leave the
shore :

The Power, appeased, with winds sufficed
the sail,

The bellying canvas strutted with the gale ;

The waves indignant roar with surly pride,

And press against the sides, and beaten off
divide.

They cut the foamy way, with force impelled

Superior, till the Trojan port they held :

Then, hauling on the strand, their galley
moor,

And pitch their tents along the crooked
shore. 660

Meantime the goddess-born in secret
pined ;

Nor visited the camp, nor in the council
joined,

But, keeping close, his gnawing heart he fed
With hopes of vengeance on the tyrant's

head :

And wished for bloody wars and mortal wounds,
And of the Greeks oppressed in fight to hear
the dying sounds.

Now, when twelve days complete had run
their race,

The gods bethought them of the cares be-
longing to their place.

Jove at their head ascending from the sea,
A shoal of puny Powers attend his way. 670
Then Thetis, not unmindful of her son,
Emerging from the deep, to beg her boon,
Pursued their track; and wakened from his
rest,

Before the sovereign stood, a morning guest.
Him in the circle, but apart, she found:
The rest at awful distance stood around.
She bowed, and ere she durst her suit begin,
One hand embraced his knees, one propped
his chin."

Then thus: "If I, celestial sire, in aught
Have served thy will, or gratified thy
thought, 680

One glimpse of glory to my issue give;
Graced for the little time he has to live.
Dishonoured by the king of men he stands.
His rightful prize is ravished from his hands.
But thou, O father, in my son's defence,
Assume thy power, assert thy providence.
Let Troy prevail, till Greece the affront has
paid

With doubled honours, and redeemed his
aid."

She ceased, but the considering god was
mute:

Till she, resolved to win, renewed her suit; 690
Nor loosed her hold, but forced him to
reply:

"Or grant me my petition, or deny:
Jove cannot fear: then tell me to my face
That I, of all the gods, am least in grace.
This I can bear." The Cloud-compeller
mourned,

And sighing first, this answer he returned:
"Know'st thou what clamours will disturb
my reign,

What my stunned ears from Juno must
sustain?

In council she gives licence to her tongue,
Loquacious, brawling, ever in the wrong. 700
And now she will my partial power upbraid,
If, alienate from Greece, I give the Trojans
aid.

But thou depart, and shun her jealous sight,
The care be mine, to do Pelides right.
Go then, and on the faith of Jove rely,
When nodding to thy suit, he bows the sky,
This ratifies the irrevocable doom:
The sign ordained, that what I will shall
come;
The stamp of heaven, and seal of fate." He
said,

And shook the sacred honours of his
head. 710
With terror trembled heaven's subsiding
hill:

And from his shaken curls ambrosial dews
distil.

The goddess goes exulting from his sight,
And seeks the seas profound; and leaves the
realms of light.

He moves into his hall: the Powers resort,
Each from his house, to fill the sovereign's
court;

Nor waiting summons, nor expecting stood,
But met with reverence, and received the
god.

He mounts the throne; and Juno took her
place:

But sullen discontent sate lowering on her
face. 720

With jealous eyes at distance she had seen,
Whispering with Jove, the silver-footed
Queen;

Then, impotent of tongue (her silence broke),
Thus turbulent in rattling tone she spoke:

"Author of ills, and close contriver Jove,
Which of thy dames, what prostitute of
love,

Has held thy ear so long, and begged so
hard,

For some old service done, some new
reward?

Apart you talked, for that's your special
care,

The consort never must the council share. 730

One gracious word is for a wife too much ;
Such is a marriage vow, and Jove's own faith
is such."

Then thus the Sire of gods, and men below :
"What I have hidden, hope not thou to
know.

Even goddesses are women : and no wife
Has power to regulate her husband's life :
Counsel she may ; and I will give thy ear
The knowledge first, of what is fit to hear.
What I transact with others, or alone,
Beware to learn ; nor press too near the
throne." 740

To whom the goddess with the charming
eyes,

"What hast thou said, O tyrant of the
skies !

When did I search the secrets of thy reign,
Though privileged to know, but privileged
in vain ?

But well thou dost, to hide from common
sight

Thy close intrigues, too bad to bear the light.
Nor doubt I, but the silver-footed dame,
Tripping from sea, on such an errand came,
To grace her issue, at the Grecians' cost,
And for one peevish man destroy an host." 750

To whom the Thunderer made this stern
reply :

"My household curse, my lawful plague,
the spy

Of Jove's designs, his other squinting eye ;
Why this vain prying, and for what avail ?
Jove will be master still, and Juno fail.

Should thy suspicious thoughts divine aright,
Thou but becom'st more odious to my sight
For this attempt : uneasy life to me,
Still watched and importuned, but worse for
thee.

Curb that impetuous tongue, before too
late 760

The gods behold, and tremble at thy fate.
Pitying, but daring not, in thy defence,
To lift a hand against Omnipotence."

This heard, the imperious Queen sate
mute with fear,

Nor further durst incense the gloomy
Thunderer.

Silence was in the court at this rebuke :
Nor could the gods abashed sustain their
sovereign's look.

The limping Smith observed the saddened
feast,

And hopping here and there (himself a jest)
Put in his word, that neither might
offend ; 770

To Jove obsequious, yet his mother's friend.
"What end in heaven will be of civil war,

If gods of pleasure will for mortals jar ?
Such discord but disturbs our jovial feast ;
One grain of bad embitters all the best.

Mother, though wise yourself, my counsel
weigh ;

"Tis much unsafe my sire to disobey.
Not only you provoke him to your cost,
But mirth is marred, and the good cheer is
lost,

Tempt not his heavy hand ; for he has
power 780

To throw you headlong from his heavenly
tower.

But one submissive word, which you let fall,
Will make him in good humour with us all."

He said no more ; but crowned a bowl,
unbid :

The laughing nectar overlooked the lid :
Then put it to her hand ; and thus pursued :

"This cursed quarrel be no more renewed.
Be, as becomes a wife, obedient still ;
Though grieved, yet subject to her husband's
will.

I would not see you beaten ; yet afraid 790
Of Jove's superior force, I dare not aid.

Too well I know him, since that hapless hour
When I and all the gods employed our
power

To break your bonds : me by the heel he
drew,

And o'er heaven's battlements with fury
threw :

All day I fell ; my flight at morn begun,
And ended not but with the setting sun.

Pitched on my head, at length the Læonian
ground

Received my battered skull, the Sinthians
healed my wound."

At Vulcan's homely mirth his mother
smiled, 800
And smiling took the cup the clown had
filled.
The reconciler-bowl went round the board,
Which, emptied, the rude skinker still re-
stored.
Loud fits of laughter seized the guests to see
The limping god so deft at his new ministry.
The feast continued till declining light :
They drank, they laughed, they loved, and
then 'twas night.
Nor wanted tuneful harp, nor vocal quire ;
The Muses sung ; Apollo touched the lyre.
Drunken at last, and drowsy they depart, 810
Each to his house ; adorned with laboured
art
Of the lame architect : the thundering god
Even he withdrew to rest, and had his load.
His swimming head to needful sleep ap-
plied ;
And Juno lay unheeded by his side.

THE LAST PARTING OF
HECTOR AND ANDRO-
MACHE.

FROM THE SIXTH BOOK OF THE
ILIAD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Hector returning from the field of battle, to
visit Helen, his sister-in-law, and his brother
Paris, who had fought unsuccessfully hand
to hand with Menelaus, from thence goes to
his own palace to see his wife, Andromache,
and his infant son, Astyanax. The descrip-
tion of that interview is the subject of this
translation.

THUS having said, brave Hector went to see
His virtuous wife, the fair Andromache.
He found her not at home ; for she was
gone,
Attended by her maid and infant son,
To climb the steepy tower of Ilion :

From whence, with heavy heart, she might
survey
The bloody business of the dreadful day.
Her mournful eyes she cast around the
plain,
And sought the lord of her desires in vain.
But he, who thought his peopled palace
bare, 10
When she, his only comfort, was not there,
Stood in the gate, and asked of every one,
Which way she took, and whither she was
gone :
If to the court, or, with his mother's train,
In long procession to Minerva's fane ?
The servants answered, Neither to the
court,
Where Priam's sons and daughters did
resort,
Nor to the temple was she gone, to move
With prayers the blue-eyed progeny of
Jove :
But more solicitous for him alone, 20
Than all their safety, to the tower was
gone,
There to survey the labours of the field,
Where the Greeks conquer, and the Trojans
yield ;
Swiftly she passed, with fear and fury wild ;
The nurse went lagging after with the
child.
This heard, the noble Hector made no
stay :
The admiring throng divide to give him
way ;
He passed through every street, by which
he came,
And at the gate he met the mournful dame.
His wife beheld him, and with eager
pace 30
Flew to his arms, to meet a dear embrace :
His wife, who brought in dower Cilicia's
crown,
And in herself a greater dower alone :
Action's heir, who on the woody plain
Of Hippoplacus did in Thebe reign.
Breathless she flew, with joy and passion
wild :
The nurse came lagging after with the child.

The royal babe upon her breast was laid ;
Who, like the morning star, his beams displayed.

Scamandrius was his name, which Hector gave, 40
From that fair flood which Ilion's wall did lave :

But him Astyanax the Trojans call,
From his great father, who defends the wall.

Hector beheld him with a silent smile :
His tender wife stood weeping by the while :

Pressed in her own, his warlike hand she took,

Then sighed, and thus prophetically spoke :
"Thy dauntless heart (which I foresee too late)

Too daring man, will urge thee to thy fate :
Nor dost thou pity, with a parent's mind, 50
This helpless orphan, whom thou leav'st behind ;

Nor me, the unhappy partner of thy bed ;
Who must in triumph by the Greeks be led ;

They seek thy life, and, in unequal fight
With many, will oppress thy single might :
Better it were for miserable me
To die, before the fate which I foresee.

For ah ! what comfort can the world bequeath

To Hector's widow, after Hector's death ?

"Eternal sorrow and perpetual tears 60
Began my youth, and will conclude my years :

I have no parents, friends, nor brothers left ;
By stern Achilles all of life bereft.

Then when the walls of Thebes he overthrew,

His fatal hand my royal father slew ;
He slew Aetion, but despoiled him not ;
Nor in his hate the funeral rites forgot ;
Armed as he was he sent him whole below,
And revered thus the manes of his foe :
A tomb he raised ; the mountain nymphs around 70

Inclosed with planted elms the holy ground.

"My seven brave brothers in one fatal day
To Death's dark mansions took the mournful way ;

Slain by the same Achilles, while they keep
The bellowing oxen and the bleating sheep.
My mother, who the royal sceptre swayed,
Was captive to the cruel victor made,
And hither led ; but, hence redeemed with gold,

Her native country did again behold,
And but beheld : for soon Diana's dart, 80
In an unhappy chase, transfix'd her heart.

"But thou, my Hector, art thyself alone
My parents, brothers, and my lord in one.
Oh, kill not all my kindred o'er again,
Nor tempt the dangers of the dusty plain ;
But in this tower, for our defence, remain.
Thy wife and son are in thy ruin lost ;
This is a husband's and a father's post.

The Scæan gate commands the plains below :

Here marshal all thy soldiers as they go ; 90

And hence with other hands repel the foe.
By yon wild fig-tree lies their chief ascent,
And thither all their powers are daily bent ;
The two Ajaces have I often seen,
And the wronged husband of the Spartan queen :

With him his greater brother ; and with these

Fierce Diomedes and bold Meriones :
Uncertain if by augury or chance,
But by this easy rise they all advance ;
Guard well that pass, secure of all beside." 100

To whom the noble Hector thus replied :

"That and the rest are in my daily care ;
But, should I shun the dangers of the war,
With scorn the Trojans would reward my pains,
And their proud ladies with their sweeping trains.

The Grecian swords and lances I can bear ;
But loss of honour is my only fear.

Shall Hector, born to war, his birthright yield,

Betray his courage, and forsake the field ?

Early in rugged arms I took delight, 110
And still have been the foremost in the
fight :

With dangers dearly have I bought re-
nown,
And am the champion of my father's crown.
And yet my mind forebodes, with sure
presage,

That Troy shall perish by the Grecian
rage.

The fatal day draws on, when I must fall,
And universal ruin cover all.

Not Troy itself, though built by hands
divine,

Nor Priam, nor his people, nor his line,
My mother, nor my brothers of renown, 120
Whose valour yet defends the unhappy
town ;

Not these, nor all their fates which I fore-
see,

Are half of that concern I have for thee.

I see, I see thee, in that fatal hour,
Subjected to the victor's cruel power ;
Led hence a slave to some insulting sword,
Forlorn, and trembling at a foreign lord ;
A spectacle in Argos, at the loom,
Gracing with Trojan fights a Grecian
room ;

Or from deep wells the living stream to
take, 130

And on thy weary shoulders bring it back.
While, groaning under this laborious life,
They insolently call thee Hector's wife ;
Upbraid thy bondage with thy husband's
name ;

And from my glory propagate thy shame.
This when they say, thy sorrows will in-
crease

With anxious thoughts of former happi-
ness ;

That he is dead who could thy wrongs re-
dress.

But I, oppressed with iron sleep before,
Shall hear thy unavailing cries no more." 140

He said—

Then, holding forth his arms, he took his
boy,

The pledge of love and other hope of Troy.

The fearful infant turned his head away,
And on his nurse's neck reclining lay,
His unknown father shunning with affright,
And looking back on so uncouth a sight ;
Daunted to see a face with steel o'er-
spread,

And his high plume that nodded o'er his
head.

His sire and mother smiled with silent joy ;
And Hector hastened to relieve his boy ; 150
Dismissed his burnished helm, that shone
afar,

The pride of warriors, and the pomp of
war :

The illustrious babe, thus reconciled, he
took ;

Hugged in his arms, and kissed, and thus
he spoke :

" Parent of gods and men, propitious
Jove,

And you bright synod of the Powers above ;
On this my son your gracious gifts bestow ;
Grant him to live, and great in arms to
grow,

To reign in Troy, to govern with renown,
To shield the people, and assert the
crown : 160

That when hereafter he from war shall
come,

And bring his Trojans peace and triumph
home,

Some aged man, who lives this act to see,
And who in former times remembered me,
May say, The son in fortitude and fame
Outgoes the mark, and drowns his father's
name :

That at these words his mother may rejoice,
And add her suffrage to the public voice.'

Thus having said,

He first with suppliant hands the gods
adored : 170

Then to the mother's arms the child re-
stored :

With tears and smiles she took her son, and
pressed

The illustrious infant to her fragrant breast.
He, wiping her fair eyes, indulged her grief,
And eased her sorrows with this last relief :

" My wife and mistress, drive thy fears away, Nor give so bad an omen to the day ; Think not it lies in any Grecian's power, To take my life before the fatal hour. When that arrives, nor good nor bad can fly The irrevocable doom of destiny. Return, and to divert thy thoughts at home, There task thy maids, and exercise the loom, Employed in works that womankind be- come.	The toils of war and feats of chivalry Belong to men, and most of all to me." At this, for new replies he did not stay, But laced his crested helm, and strode away. His lovely consort to her house returned, And looking often back, in silence mourned : Home when she came, her secret woe she vents, And fills the palace with her loud laments ; These loud laments her echoing maids re- store, And Hector, yet alive, as dead deplore.
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THE END.

